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A
Scriptural Illustration
OF THE DOCTRINE OF
REGENERATION;

INTERSPERSED

2
With some short OBSERVATIONS upon
the DOCTRINE of

THE

QUAKERS, SOCINIANS, METHODISTS,
and the Church of ENGLAND-MEN.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A L E T T E R

ON THE SUBJECT OF

B A P T I S M:

WRITTEN

To a GENTLEWOMAN at her Request.

WITH

Some slight Alterations.

By THOMAS SHERATON, Jun.

Τὸ ἡ γραφὴ λαγυ. Rom. iv. 3.

S T O C K T O N:

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To the READER.

I CANNOT promise you that the following performance is a *pattern* of pure language and connectness; nor dare I recommend it as a perfect model of an accurate style: but I dare venture to say, that it contains the honest sentiments of my heart; and what is more, that these sentiments are drawn from a serious attention to the infallible *records of truth*, by which alone we can come to the *knowledge* of salvation.

However, I cannot with some writers, hide myself from public *critical censure*, by intimating to them that these are my rough thoughts, and that if I had thought proper to condescend so far as to please the critic, I could have done it: but on the contrary, I freely declare, that I have written as pure and correct as I can. Not indeed, with a direct view of pleasing them, supposing I were able, (which I cannot allow myself the vanity to think so) but because I think, it is the duty of every one who takes upon him to inform the public, to do it in as correct and intelligible a manner as he can; but more especially on subjects drawn from revelation, which are of the utmost importance. It is true, I have endeavoured not to offend the delicate ears nor penetrating eyes of the critic knowingly; and therefore, if through the inspection of their superior judgment, any thing be found incorrect, I hope, this open confession to them, will entitle me to a small portion of their mercy.

As to the doctrines treated of in the subsequent pages, I cannot help thinking, but the above gentlemen will deem them the effects of a mad and reveried brain; while the Pharisee and mere nominalist, will estimate them at the rate of dangerous and uncharitable. Yet, though I expect all

this, (and perhaps something more) I am not altogether without hopes, but some few of the weak and baser sort, will esteem them *the words of soberness and truth*. For remember, that, “Not many wise
 “men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many
 “noble are called. But God hath chosen the *foolish*
 “*things* of the world, to confound the wise; and
 “God hath chosen the *weak things* of the world,
 “to confound the mighty; and *base things* of the
 “world, and *things despised*, hath God chosen;
 “that no flesh should glory in his presence*.”

If this passage be duly considered, with some others of the like import, which might be cited, I am apprehensive they will lead you to apologize in your own mind, for such a one as me writing on a subject, which of all others, appears to me, the most needful to know: seeing, that the all-wise Sovereign, and supreme Jehovah, hath not at all times used those instruments of public benefit and information, which we naturally conceive are the most eligible.—Such as the rich, learned, wise, and reverend of this world. And the reason why he hath in general chosen men of a contrary character, is given us by himself, in the passage now quoted, namely, “That no flesh should glory in
 “his presence,” but that all the honour, power, and glory, might be ascribed to him alone; and, that the truth might be demonstrated to be of God, and not of the wisdom, learning, and excellency of man.

I do not, nor want not, to deny, that God ever thought proper to chuse at any time, the rich, learned, wise, and reverend of this world, for public good, and the vindication of his truth: there are instances of this also. Paul, was one of these sent; but we find, what the effects of his conversion to Christ were, “That he counted all
 “things

* i. Cor. i. 26—29.

"things but lose, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord *." So that even in such a case as this, the Lord still maintains and manifests his own power, by his own truth, in so effectually working by it in the heart of such a one as Paul, as to lead him to chuse the lose of those things, which formerly constituted his happiness, and willingly to bear the opposite character in the eyes of the world, and to be daily loaded with the epithets of a mean, foolish, illiterate, dishonourable, and base man. These are indeed, very trying names to one, who before had valued himself on account of his wisdom and learning, &c. This comes to the same thing which was mentioned before, (i. e.) That no flesh should glory in the presence of the Lord. For if the learned disciple of Dr. Gamaliel, was taught of God to lay aside his own wisdom and learning, and what is more wonderful, his old religion, in which he excelled in knowledge and zeal, his countrymen, to become a disciple of Christ, receive his religion, and practice no other wisdom than that which he had from above †, add to which, his lose of most of the temporal comforts of this life, with the cruel treatment he met with from men for the gospel's sake; I cannot help thinking, but these discovered as much of the power and truth of God effectually working in Paul, as were manifested in the rude *fishers of Galilee*, when they left their nets, and were in an amazing manner, qualified to express themselves in suitable words to their hearers in various languages, and were clothed with wisdom, superior to any other men. The human wisdom, learning, &c. which Paul had before he was called, was then laid aside, that he might receive heavenly wisdom. The defects and deficiencies, which these poor Galileans were the subjects of, through the want

of a liberal education, were made up by the education which they received from Jesus, and the powerful teaching of the spirit of God. So that they became (as apostles) equal to the learned Paul, who was brought down, by the same powerful teaching, to a level with these rusticks. Amazing! how confounding was this sovereign and divine procedure to the wise Greeks and unbelieving Jews! Now therefore, as we see, from these instances, that God is not at all confined to any set of men, exclusive of the rest, to state and point out, any part of his revealed mind and will to mankind; it may perhaps, be a more prudent and wise way, for the reader of this address, not to throw aside with a contemptible sneer, this small piece which may be put into his hand, under the influence of the vulgar notion, that it can be of no use to mankind, because it comes from the hand of a mechanic, and one, who never received the advantage of a *collegial* or *academical* education. And I would likewise, humbly advise him, if he can so far overcome the above objections in his own mind, as to give himself liberty to read it through, entirely to forget, in the process thereof, the mean author, least the prejudice of his mind, operate so powerfully against him, as to prevent all scripture, and sound argument, from having any weight with him: for, unless this corroding worm at the bottom of all, (prejudice against the writer) be guarded against; if scripture, and arguments therefrom, should be at times, plausible to his view, and likely to prevail in his mind, *she* will rise as a grave casuist, and mighty champion of her party, and whisper in his ears, that he must be mistaken, and guilty of credulity, to think that any thing coming from such a one as the arrogant writer can be right or worth while attending to. But let me tell you freely, that if you be so far led by her whispering dictates, as to make such conclusions in your own mind against any writer,

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it is a proof, you never knew the truth : for, when plain scripture is produced, and arguments drawn from thence brought forth, they cannot but be received in humility, by all those who fear God, tho' the instrument be ever so mean and contemptible in the eyes of the world. They who know the truth, well know, that plain scripture can receive no additional weight by the suffrages and countenance of the most learned and reverend men; neither can it lose any of its intrinsic worth, excellence, or weight, because it is advanced and exhibited by a man who takes upon him no office or authority, more than (he hopes) a humble inquirer after truth, exhorting, and receiving exhortation from his brethren. In both cases it is still the same, the sole authority of scripture, comes entirely to the real christian and received by him, independent of any number of men or their rank, either receiving or rejecting it, because God is the speaker; who must be regarded and not man, in matters of faith.

The scriptures demonstrate themselves by a careful perusal of their divine connection, with as much precision and certainty, that they are from God alone, as the mathematical proposition does, that *two and two make four* : though the principles of demonstration be sooner laid down and attained in the latter than in the former. And will any one say, that the truth of the proposition, two and two make four, comes with more evidence and certainty, when uttered, or if expressed, by the mouth of the greatest mathematician, than when expressed by the mouth of a mere school-boy ? Is then the truth of scripture, less evident and sure, or less worthy to be received in the mouth of a ploughman, (if he be able to point out its beauty and connection) than in the mouth of a philosopher ?

I would now drop a few words to the religious world, especially to those of it who take upon them
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the name *reverend*, and those who act as pastors of congregations.—With all due respect and submission to the great learning of the former, and superior abilities of the latter, I would take the freedom to inform them, provided any of them should condescend so low as to read this, that I have not set about the publishing of it, from a sense of my equal abilities to the task, but from a view of their great neglect of the subject in question, and almost total ignorance of it; the effects of which, are very plain to be seen, in the conduct and by the confessions of your hearers: for, it cannot reasonably be expected, that people can come to the knowledge of the truth, or live according to it, while they are receiving doctrines from such teachers, quite repugnant to the word of God. The old adage, must still hold good: As is the shepherd, so are the sheep. And there are some other motives which I have for publishing, that I think most prudent not to mention, as they are liable to be misconstrued, and may be thought a sounding of my own trumpet, or a too forward mind to let the world know how good I am. There is one above that knows my end in this attempt, and to whom I shall ere long, have to account for all the words that I have spoken in the following sheets. I hope therefore, you will have patience with me, as I am willing to appeal to the Judge of all the earth, who cannot but judge righteously; and whose judgment will be according to his own revealed word, which we all have in our possession. We must stand or fall by the Bible; and not by any human articles of faith drawn up by any society under heaven. These, at the last day of final accompts, will never be brought into question, except to condemn them as the erroneous inventions of men, to set aside the force and spirituality of the pure word of God.

In this small tract, I have taken the liberty to quote some passages out of the works of some great
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and learned men, which passages appear to me to be expressive of their leading and principal views of *regeneration*; and at the same time, to my apprehension, totally opposite to the truth of God. When any one reads an author, he has an undoubted right to form his own judgment of him, according to the plain and common meaning of words, and their obvious sense as intended by the writer: and thanks be to God, who rules the hearts of princes, for the present privilege of speaking one's own mind on such writers, without being afraid of the corporal punishment of the civil powers. Nor was it from a view of ranking or making myself equal to these great men, in point of learning, wisdom, fortune, &c. for in these respects I am ready to wipe their shoes: but it was with a design to shew them as they stand in contrast in their opinions with the word of God, and that their hearers might consider, and compare the sentiments and sayings of their great leaders, with the Bible, and then judge for themselves with all freedom. If they do not, it is a plain proof, they are the children of antichrist.

Lastly: a few words to those two or three pastors of my acquaintance, whom I cannot but esteem as ministers of Jesus, and love them as such, though they differ from me in some little punctilioes, seeing they bear the grand and leading marks of the true shepherds of his little flock.

Perhaps you will blame me for meddling with the errors of the *Quakers*, *Socinians*, *Methodists*, and church of *England men*; seeing they are so glaring and palpable, that the weakest saint of Jesus may discover them. In reply to this, I would observe, that perhaps the errors of these sects, lay as deep in their minds, as those of the more refined dissenters. But whether this be the case or not, the truth will be found as valuable to a Quaker, &c. if he receive it, as it will to any other man: and I as much wish, that they may receive it, as the
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more refined dissenters. I must also inform you, that regeneration and baptism, are my chief subjects, and not the errors of these people, though I have touched upon them a little, here and there, so far as they interfere with the doctrines of regeneration. Doctrines, that are the most glaringly false, are the easiest detected and brought to light; and therefore, best suit my abilities in so doing: but as to the occult, remote, deep, and mysterious errors of refined and double refined dissenters, I leave them to you my brethren, who act in the pastoral office, and have more time and greater abilities than I have for this difficult employment. However, I don't think that there is one doctrine, which is espoused by these people now mentioned, that is so absurd or glaringly false, as the doctrine of the soul sleepers, or those who say, that after the death of the body, the soul passes into a state of insensibility, or in other words, "That the soul dies with the body, and remains incogitative untill the time of the resurrection." Yet I find one of my friends spending his time, though not in vain, in detecting this foolish and unscriptural doctrine, which he has done to my satisfaction; though there be some things contained in his pamphlet*, touching some other subjects, which I beg leave to differ with him in. Therefore, my dear friends, I hope you will judge of this my attempt in a christian and candid manner; and not rashly deny its usefulness to others, because it comes from so weak an instrument.

As to the letter on baptism, I do not publish it because I think it contains something entirely new, which others have not before observed, but because it is short and (I think) plain, and on that account, may be as useful to mean capacities, as those of the elaborate kind. Some would persuade us, that there can be no just reason for writing,
unless

* See scriptural evidence, in favour of a separate state.

unless we can produce something quite novel: but this seems to be more according to the laws of conceit and whimsicalness, than of scripture and sound judgment. There is in this maxim, a bad tendency, which will set people to work to invent things for the sake of writing, which never had any foundation in scripture. There are indeed, some of the plainest truths of scripture, which appear quite new to some; but it is because they have not duly examined the word of God. Many scripture doctrines have been so long out of practice by the bulk of mankind, that when any one is roused by true zeal to revive them again, they are esteemed of men, as setters forth of strange doctrines. But doctrines, which are in themselves really new, not being found in scripture, are greedily received by men in general; to give a catalogue of which, would be rather too tedious at present, and perhaps of no service. To all real believers, the reason which Peter gives for writing, will suffice, if there be no other: and that is, "To put them
 "in REMEMBRANCE of these things, though they
 "know them, and be established in the present
 "truth. Yea, I think it meet, (says he) as long
 "as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up, by
 "PUTTING YOU IN REMEMBRANCE." See Peter
 i. 12, 13.

A Scrip-

To the Reader.

It was my purpose to have printed this book in a small and convenient form, and with a view to the convenience of the reader, which will be found in the small size of the book, and in the cheapness of the price. The book is printed in a small and convenient form, and with a view to the convenience of the reader, which will be found in the small size of the book, and in the cheapness of the price.



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A Scriptural Illustration, &c.

CHAP. I.

The Gospel by St. JOHN, Chap. III. Ver. 3.

Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.

AFTER all that hath been written for these many centuries which have elapsed since the ever-blessed *resurrection* of Jesus, on the various subjects professedly drawn from the *Bible*, surely none ever demanded so much attention, as that under our present consideration: for without the scripture knowledge of this most important of all doctrines, all other sciences are but trifling. We may enter in and see the kingdom of God without their aid, but without the ineffimable blessing of *regeneration* we cannot. And what then will a man profit, if after he have spent his whole time after this world's goods, he be destitute of the *one thing needful*, and *lose his soul*. This doctrine, is the leading point of real religion; it stands in the christian's mind, as the Alpha of all that he knows.

It does not signify much, what doctrines and opinions, or how many of them a man may have been taught, if he have hitherto overlooked the real nature of this new birth; or have been deluded by Satan and false teachers, respecting the ideas and experience of it, as laid down in scripture: for he will find it necessary, when once he discovers the cheat, to undo, all he had done before,

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and begin at this very first principle, and as a child, receive the knowledge of the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world. How rational then would it be! for every one to make a full pause, and say unto his soul, *What is it to be born again?* but it would be much more so, diligently to search the scriptures, for the answer of this most momentous question.

The chief part of authors which I have read on this subject, yea, I may say, nearly all of them, have rather given us their own experience*, distinct from the word of God, than trace it from the sacred pages of infallibility; where we have not only verbal descriptions of it, but plain facts also, to ascertain the way in which it was effected, the means made use of by divine wisdom for accomplishing this work, and the certain influence it had on the lives and conduct of all those who were thus *born of God*.

The reason is obvious, why they have chosen this way, and why they have recommended it to others, namely, their not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God; and therefore they have been ready to take up with regeneration as they could bear with it, or in such a light as not to condemn themselves: for it is difficult for any to enquire after that as a truth, which necessarily proves, that what he at present holds and experiences as truth, is falsehood.

The general method of recommending one's own experience to others as a guide, is, at the best view that can be taken of it, but as the *trumpet giving*

* I do not mean by this, to insinuate, that scriptural regeneration exists in the minds of the recipients thereof, without the experience of it in their souls: I only mean, that let our experience be what it may, which we may call regeneration, if it is not founded in the truth of scripture, it can be no standard for others.

giving an uncertain sound, both to a man himself and others, let his experience be ever so striking to the mind, and in many respects conformable to the truth of the scriptures: for it sometimes happens, that his experience runs so low, that he finds reason to question whether ever he were really *born again*.

Or again, suppose him possessed with such an even tenor of mind, and unchanging sensible feelings of what he may take to be regeneration, so as never to doubt of the goodness of his state; yet, in such a case, how unfit and partial a judge is the heart of man in favour of itself! yea, and how unsafe it is, to abide by the determination of such a judge, without the touchstone of truth along with it! seeing the scriptures declare, that *the heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked*.

The truth of the above observations is evident from the many views of regeneration, given us by the many authors that have written upon it. One of them expressly encourages these differences, and confirms the truth of the above charge. His words are these: "But think not I have here chalked out a way for every one to walk in, for I have only wrote my own experience." But notwithstanding this *dreaming writer** could not chalk out a way for every one to walk in, yet the scriptures have done it, and plainly too, so that *he who runs may read*. The scriptures plainly assert that there is but *one way*; and *Jesus is that way, and the truth, and the life*. The Lord says, "I will give them *one heart*, and *one way*, that they may fear me for ever†."

B 2

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* See THOMAS BROMLEY's soul's progress in the work of the new birth.

† Jer. xxxii. 39.

The wisdom of God, hath only appointed one way, in natural generation, and that is, by the union of the man and woman: so likewise, in spiritual generation, there is but one way revealed to man, and that is, his word and spirit in conjunction, effectually working in the hearts of his children. I have, therefore, nothing to propose to such as shall peruse the following pages, but what is plainly declared and demonstrated by facts, recorded in the only sure guide to eternal life, the *holy scriptures*; leaving the whole to the blessing of that spirit, who alone can direct and lead into the true knowledge and experience of *scriptural regeneration*.

I have chosen the passage already cited, as the most emphatical in shewing the absolute necessity of this change: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be *born again*, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus, to whom this answer was addressed, was most likely a guest at the marriage celebration in Cana of Galilee, where Jesus, for the first time, performed some notable miracles. Though no mention be made of any, save that of changing the water into wine, yet, from Nicodemus's manner of expressing himself, it seems that there were more; for says he, *no man can do these miracles* (speaking in the plural) *except God be with him*. What these miracles were in particular, is not our present purpose to enquire into, further than mention, that they are supposed by some, to be the dispossessing of devils, and the curing of all manner of diseases by a *word* or *touch*. These works were truly consistent with our Lord's character, as the promised *Messiah*; for the prophets in general, (Isaiah in particular) speak of him as opening the eyes of the blind, raising the dead, &c. which were capital signs of his divine mission, and of his being the true *Christ of God*. This was the grand end of all his extraordinary operations. Accordingly we are told, "That this beginning

"of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and
 "manifested forth his *glory*, and his disciples be-
 "lieved on him*. They had believed on him before,
 but their faith was the more confirmed when they
 saw his works. Nicodemus too, seems to have been
 struck with the majesty and grandeur that appeared
 in his miracles, and with the amiableness of his
 conduct, but totally ignorant of the nature and idea
 of the new birth or regeneration; from whence pro-
 ceeded his interrogation, *How can these things be?*

CHAP. II.

I SHALL now endeavour to illustrate the answer
 of this question, by shewing, according to
 scripture, what these things are, and how they can
 be, and what effects they have on those who know
 them.

The term *regeneration*, or of being *born again*,
 necessarily implies, that the subjects of it were once
unregenerate, or in a state quite opposite to the
 former; and not as though it were some improve-
 ment made from the old state or principles, or like
 moulding the same quality into a little different form
 from what it was before; but it is a total change of
 principle and action—new knowledge and new life.

"† If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*†."

B 3

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‡ This doctrine by the way, entirely destroys the
 main foundation of the Quakers, who say, "Every
 "man naturally, is endowed with the light and seed of
 "God within him, and that all the defect lays in their
 "not following this light naturally residing in the con-
 "science." If this were true, what need would there
 be for the new birth? none at all; it supercedes the
 very idea of it: for what better birth can a man have,
 than to be born of the light and seed of God? And
 there.

* John ii. 11.

† ii. Cor. v. 16.

To elucidate fully the *doctrine of regeneration*, it will be proper, first, to consider the state of man before and after the fall; for in this way only, we shall be able to know the true difference between the *old and new creature*.

Man, according to his original formation, was perfectly upright; (i. e.) Adam, as he came out of the hands of his *Creator*, was a model of perfection and immaculate purity. He was placed in the garden of Eden, and possessed every blessing that the earthly paradise could afford, and his own nature enjoy. And in this state he might have continued with his help-met, had they kept the commandment, which was, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *thou shalt not eat of it*." Adam does not appear, from the account given of it in Genesis, to have had any other knowledge of God, but as an *all-powerful and wise Creator*, and a bountiful benefactor; from whom he received a free grant to eat of every tree in the garden, *save one*.

Now as he had no higher knowledge of God than this, he could have communion with him in nothing of a celestial nature; but his whole circuit of happiness was in the enjoyment of the earth in its perfection, and the smiles of the Deity in this way. Paul says, "the first man is of the earth, earthy; and as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy*." But though his constitution were earthy,

therefore, according to this, mankind, only want to be exhorted to live agreeable to their birth, by which obedience they secure their right and title to their Father's inheritance; and consequently our Lord's answer to Nicodemus must have been worded thus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man follow the light and seed within him, and improve it, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

* i. Cor. xv. 47, 48.

earthly, yet he was sinless, and made after the *image of God*; or in other words, the *moral character of God* was implanted in his soul, when he drew the breath of life, after that God had “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a *“living soul”*.”

This then is that knowledge, life, and happiness, which Adam enjoyed before the introduction of sin. And it would have been the happiness of all his posterity too, if his offence had not brought death † and all their woes. It hath been advanced by some, that God *designed Adam's fall*, and therefore he withdrew his power from him, in order that the serpent might overcome him, that God's secret decrees might be accomplished. And to this fall, they ascribe the revelation of eternal love, and the possession of ultimate glory; as if these might not have been displayed and enjoyed without the entrance of sin and misery. But it is plain to the simple minded, that this fall depended entirely on Adam's own disobedience; and likewise, the enjoyment of his blissful state in paradise, on his own obedience. He had power to stand and to fall, but it was left to his own choice to do either.

So far was it from God's decreeing Adam's fall in a secret way, that it is evident he *intended* ‡ that Adam and all his race should stand. For what else can be inferred from the threatening, “in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Death was the reward, or wages, due to sin; and the earthly inheritance, that which was entailed to obedience. And surely then, when God pronounced

† I mean he intended it in a conditional way, not absolutely; for whatever God intends, when the event depends upon himself, it will infallibly come to pass. But we never can say, that God was the author of sin, by an absolute decree that it should come.

* Gen. ii. 7. † Rom. v. 12.

nounced the threatening, he meant to deter Adam from transgressing, by declaring its direful consequences. If so, it was the will of God, that Adam should obey and live; for we must not, cannot, think to solve the difficulty by asserting, that God hath a secret and a revealed will contrary to each other: the former, to link a chain of providences together to make a *stumbling-block* of, and the latter, to condemn men for falling upon it. This would be making God worse than man, and as bad as devils. God foresaw Adam's fall indeed, but his foreknowledge had no influence over him to do evil. If it had, it would appear yet worse, if worse can be, in the case of angels, that God should, somehow or other, in a secret way, influence those bright *intelligences* to leave their first estate, and then consign them over to everlasting darkness for their rebellion, without any hope of mercy. The case of man would have been somewhat better; because there were hopes of mercy for him; but Jesus took not upon him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; and therefore, *angels were passed by.*

On the other hand, let those who blindly and roundly assert universal redemption, and deny the absolute *sovereignty* of God, tell us, how it came, that Jehovah should leave those once *effulgent and perfect spirits*, without the least hope of ever being delivered from their unspeakable anguish and condemnation; whilst he at the same time promised and exhibited mercy to some of the children of men. Had men any claim upon the *divine being* more than angels? surely not. Then why was it that men were preferred? all who believe will undoubtedly answer with Paul, "having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

Therefore

Therefore the distinction that is evidently and undeniably made between men and angels, in favour of the former is, and may, consistent with the same sovereignty and justice, be made among mankind themselves.

But though these were given to Christ from everlasting by the Father, and the rest of mankind, *designed conditionally* for the everlasting enjoyment of bliss in the *earthly paradise*, and not to be damned as some say, yet they were all affected alike by the fall. So Paul saith of himself and his brethren: "Among whom also we all had our conversation, in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind; and were (*tekna phusei orges*) by natural constitution, children of wrath, or revengefulness, even as others*."

And he seems plainly enough to intimate to us the original cause of their being the children of wrath, if we, with this passage, compare Rom. v. ver. 19, where he says, "by ONE man's disobedience many were made sinners." Yet he as plainly shews how this wrath and condemnation is enhanced and aggravated, which is, *by walking in the lusts of the flesh, and fulfilling the desires of the mind and of the flesh*. In this state all men are in since the fall, yea, they are "dead in trespasses and sins†," or in a state of condemnation and death: *for the wages of sin is death*. There seems to be no exception from this, neither in the account given us by scripture, nor from the universal experience that we have of all men in the world. Every unprejudiced mind, who has taken but a small view of things in the world, will acknowledge this, because he cannot but daily see it demonstrated before him, in the aptitude that there is in little children to sin. As soon as they can say or do any thing, they say and do things contrary to the mind of God,

* Eph. ii. 2. † Ibid ii. 1.

God, as far as they are able; yea, they shew a hatred of God, and a love to every nonsensical thing that makes its appearance before them. Their ideas, as soon as they have any, are wrong; and their conceptions of the character and truth of God are false.

We find the effects of the fall very early in the scripture, even in the case of *Cain's* murdering his brother *Abel*—attended with lies, and an evasion of the fact before his *Maker*. And as *Abel's blood* seems to have been the first that cried unto God for vengeance, so it also seems that *Cain* had no precedent for it; and therefore this murder came not, as some say sin comes, merely by *habit* and *bad example*, but from an inbred principle of *pride*, *envy*, and *hatred*. The Bible, from the beginning to the end, has but a poor opinion of man after the fall. It uniformly represents him as lost to all goodness—without God, and consequently without good hope in the world. This appears not to be confined to some of a bad family, or of mean birth, nor of some in a particular part of the world; for the apostle Paul proves it to be the case of all mankind by nature, both Jew and Gentile, bond and free, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, the devout and honourable of this world, as well as the publicans and harlots. For saith he, “We
 “ (Jews) are no better than the Gentiles; for we
 “ have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that
 “ they are all under sin; as it is written, *there is*
 “ *none righteous, no not one*; there is none that un-
 “ derstandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
 “ They are all gone out of the way; they are to-
 “ gether become unprofitable; there is none that
 “ doeth good, no not one. Their throat is an
 “ open sepulchre; with their tongue they have used
 “ deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips;
 “ whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness;
 “ their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction
 “ and misery are in their ways: and the way of
 “ peace

"peace have they not know: there is no fear of
"God before their eyes*."

This description of man's departure from God and his evil works, is nothing contrary to the nature † which he derived from his first parents: for it is certain they could not beget a child endowed with a better nature than their own, nor less affected by the fall than themselves. Hence our Lord saith to Nicodemus, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh"—and flesh it must be, turn it into whatsoever shape you please, (either self-righteous or profane) until it is *born of the spirit*.

Paul gives us another catalogue of the works of the flesh, which are these: "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance; emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like ‡."

This compendious, but comprehensive account of the works of the natural man, takes in, I am persuaded, all the forms into which nature can turn itself, both as to outward inordinancy and false religion. In this fleshly state, all men are held down by the power of prejudice against the truth, and the love of the world, with the influence which the *father of lies* hath over their minds, in presenting wrong views of the *character of God* and his truth; so that there is a moral impossibility that they should receive the truth and be converted.

Mistake

† By nature here, I mean that state of ignorance and moral depravity, which Adam was the subject of, after the fall. Otherwise nature, in the strict sense of the word, means that internal and external form in which Adam was first created—pure and perfect, after the image of God's *moral character*. See Gen. i. 26, 27.

* Rom. iii. 9 to 18, and Ps. xiv. 53. ‡ Gal. v. 19—21.

Mistake me not, for I am not in this, advancing my own reason, or merely the opinion of others, but the truth of *one*, whom custom itself forbids to disallow; who says, “the carnal mind is *enmity* “ *against God*; for it is not subject to the law of “ *God*, neither indeed can be: so then, they that “ *are in the flesh cannot please God**.”

Again, the same apostle informs us, that men not only have a natural aversion to the truth of God, but are also totally ignorant of it.—“The “ *natural man* (says he) *receiveth not the things* “ *of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto* “ *him; neither can he know them, because they are* “ *spiritually discerned* †.” The terms *carnal*, *flesh*, and *nature*, are of the same import, and not only include men as transgressors of the moral law, or as sinners by the offence of one man imputed to them; but they likewise point out the *deficiency of their nature*, in respect to spiritual things; and their inability to enjoy the *celestial life*, or the *life of Christ*, which is the life of every real believer ‡.

But this deficiency, or rather inability of nature, is no ways criminal in man, for what I mean by nature here, is pure nature, just as Adam was formed by the hand of God, when placed in the garden of Eden; which nature was only suited to earthly enjoyments. “*The first man is of the earth,* “ *earthy*||.” Therefore we see that man in his best estate, was but earthy; but though he were earthy, yet he was sinless, and as I have already said, made after the image of God. And as far as God was revealed to him by the works of creation, which shewed the *eternal power, infinite wisdom, and universal beneficence of God the Creator*, so far Adam knew him; but as to the character of Jehovah, as the God of *essential love, grace, glory, &c.* shining forth

* Rom. viii. 7. 8. † i. Cor. ii. 14. ‡ Col. iii. 4.
|| i. Cor. xv. 47.

forth in the person of his only beloved Son, to the objects thereof, or to those "Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world*," these sublime things, Adam knew nothing of, no more than a sucking child; for there was no revelation of these things at that time: and therefore Adam could not, even in his perfect state, enjoy God, as the saints do now; as it is impossible for any to know and have communion with God, farther than he makes himself known by the revelation of his will to the rational powers and understanding of mankind.

If it be so then, as it does appear, that Adam in his pure state stood in need of regeneration†, in order to prepare and qualify him for the enjoyment of God in the eternal world, it must be doubly necessary to those who are in a state of moral depravity, condemnation; and liable to eternal damnation as the wages due to sin. O sin, how extensive is thy plague! and how destructive thy nature! Sin hath pervaded

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† Mr. MURRAY, in his second Lecture on the book of Revelations, page 85, justly observes, that the "Bulk of mankind can find no need for a Mediator till there was transgression; yet I think, (says he) even in innocence a Mediator could not have been wanted; and though there never had been sin, I think we would have had the same Mediator that we have now, only he would have wanted some offices that he exercises at present. There would have been no occasion for redemption, had there been no transgression, and of consequence, our Mediator would not have been our Redeemer; but, as no man could have seen God at any time, it would still have been necessary that a Mediator should have revealed and manifested him to men." And it may be added also, that as the bulk of mankind can find no need of a Mediator till there was transgression; so neither can they find any need for a *Regenerator*, or that themselves would have required

* Eph. i. 4.

permeated the whole world, and passed through the whole mind and faculties of the soul of man; so that, *the thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually.*

But man's evil thoughts, never arrive to so high a pitch of opposition to God, as when he attempts to set up a religion, contrary to that revealed in the New Testament. And this is the natural bent of men's minds, whenever they begin to think of the necessity of religion; for they do not consult the divine oracles, nor come to the light of God's word, that their religion may be formed according to it, but they proceed upon the foundation of what they foolishly call reason, which teaches them what ideas they are to have of the character of God. And these ideas, always correspond with the supposition of what they would *be and do*, were they God. So that they know what religion they are to be of, and what views they are to have of the

required it, but upon the account of the entrance of sin. This proceeds from a mistake of the character of the great I AM, and the nature of man, or of Adam in innocence. With regard to God, it is commonly supposed, that he revealed himself to Adam, without any *medium*, before the fall. And with regard to man, considered before the fall, it is also as commonly thought, that he was so heavenly a formed creature, and knew so much of the whole character of God, that it was impossible he should stand in need of more.—And along with this they also imagine, that if sin had not entered, no one could have enjoyed more than what was experienced in the earthly paradise; which is the same as saying, that the entrance of sin was one instrumental cause of our coming to the enjoyment of ultimate and heavenly bliss. But the truth is, mankind was never without a Mediator, neither was God ever revealed at any time without *one*; as a medium whereby poor mortals might have just ideas of *him*, whom otherwise none could have seen or

the *being and attributes of God*, before ever they look with attention into *divine revelation*.

Having now given a summary view of the nature of man, before, and after the fall, it is necessary to attend to our main point, on the *doctrine of regeneration*.

CH A P. III.

REGENERATION since the fall, (as we have already said) becomes absolutely necessary on two accounts; for which reason there are two grand parts to be known and experienced in this most important of all doctrines. The first, relates to the forgiveness of sins, or justification and salvation from that state, which has been described from page the 9th to the present. The second part,

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is

or heard, neither have been capable of bearing and enjoying those *effulgent, infinite, and unspeakable perfections of glory, majesty, holiness, and immaculate purity, &c.* which he is possessed of. No; the angels themselves cannot otherwise know and enjoy the **UNSPEAKABLE**—the **UNSEEN**—the **FATHOMLESS**—and the **UNSEARCHABLE**, without a Mediator; who is the man of his right-hand—his fellow; whose goings forth were of old, and by whom the **INCOMPREHENSIBLE** created the heavens and the earth, an angels and men, even his only begotten Son;—he is the Mediator and only medium of divine life and knowledge to all in heaven, and to men on earth. The rays of divine splendour shine through him alone; and hence he is called the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

The offices which Christ took upon him, on account of the transgressions of his people, will at a certain period be laid aside, namely, when sin and misery shall be for ever destroyed, and when all the ransomed host shall be entirely delivered from its effects in soul and
body,

is closely connected with the first, and cannot be separated from it.—It consists of the communication of divine life to the soul, by which, it gradually grows into the image and likeness of God, who begot, and which relates to that state which Adam was in, before the fall; according to the description given of it in pages 6 and 7, and in the note under page 13.

First: Of justification and salvation, from sin and misery.

Every man who firmly believes the account given already, of the condemned state and depravity of human nature since the fall, must see the absolute need there is of the pardon of sin. But if he believe, he is one of these depraved and condemned wretches *himself*, he cannot but be desirous of knowing this doctrine, and of receiving the benefit arising therefrom. And indeed, there are few, if any, who will ever enquire into this doctrine, until they

body, being brought home to the mansions of their Father; but his office and character as Mediator, will never be superceded, but he will for ever shine through eternity, as the God-man and (*mesites*) middler, between the absolute I AM, and the inhabitants of the city of God.

Again; as it appears that the knowledge of God could not be conveyed in any suitable way to creatures, without a Mediator; so neither was it possible for man, according to his natural life, though considered before the fall, to enjoy God in eternal glory, without being regenerated, or possessing a different life from what he had merely by creation. It may not therefore be improper, to draw a short parrallel of the particulars, wherein the children of the first Adam, supposed in innocence, and the children of the second Adam, considered as regenerated, differ. But Adam's children would have been, in every respect, like himself, so that we may consider it by him.

ADAM.

they see themselves in this light; or as it were, forced through the stinging consciousness of a guilty mind.

Justification then, in scripture, when applied to the state of a sinner, is, God's pronouncing him just,

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ADAM.

1. He was of the earth, earthy; consequently his offspring so. i. Cor. xv. 47.

2. The life which Adam had, is called natural.

3. It is plain, that Adam knew not, nor enjoyed this spiritual life; for, says Paul, "The NATURAL MAN receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." i. Cor. ii. 14.

4. The life that Adam had by creation, was maintained and preserved by his rational powers, in moral obedience to the command of God, which depended on his own choice. He does not appear to have had any influence or supernatural aid from God,

CHRIST.

Christ is the Lord from heaven, consequently his children are heavenly. i. Cor. xv. 47.

The life which Christ hath, is called spiritual. i. Cor. xv. 46.

But it is as plain, that all the children of Jesus, do receive this life, know, and enjoy it: for, "except a man be born of water" (that is the word) and "of the SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Joh. iii. 5. "As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God." Rom. viii. 14, 16.

The life which comes through Christ to his chosen, is a communication of himself, and maintained and supported by his own divine power, independent of them, but by the use of those means which he has ordained in his word, and by the faith in

just, upright, and accepted;—cleared and acquitted from all the guilt which stood against him as a transgressor of the *divine law*. And this justification is so ample and perfect, that it extends to all sins, however offensive, and however numerous. It

ADAM.

but left to act within the circuit of his own natural motives and strength which he had by creation and natural constitution.

5. Adam's life of moral rectitude, was subject to a change and death; as we all by sad experience know and feel.

6. Adam's life, was suited to the enjoyment of the earthly paradise, the propagation of his species, and dominion over the rest of the creatures. Gen. i. 28.

7. In the earthly paradise, they were created male and female; and a great part of their happiness arose from the conjugal union. Gen. i. 27.

CHRIST.

him, who gave himself a ransom for them.

But the life of the saints, which they have of Jesus, is subject to no change, nor death, being immutable as he the author and support of it. Joh. v. 24, vi. 50, 51.

But the life of the saints, is suited to the enjoyment of the heavenly paradise above; where, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels of God. Matt. xxii. 30.

But in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female, but they are all *one* in him*: and when they come to the heavenly paradise above, then all affection, which arises from natural relation, will cease; and their union to Christ as their head, will be the spring of their love to each other, and the character of Jesus as God-man, the object of their eternal adoration. * Gal. ii. 17.

It includes all times too, as well as the number and nature; even *past, present, and to come*.*

This justification, comes not to the objects thereof, on account of any worthiness or qualifications in those who receive it, but solely on the account of what Christ hath done and suffered: "For as by *one man's disobedience* many were made sinners; so by the *obedience of one*, shall many be made righteous†.

Justification, is not (what some perverters of the gospel say) first making a man inherently righteous, and then esteeming him acquitted and justified: neither is it as others say, partly renewing the sinner's will, so that the bias of his mind and affections are after holiness; but not being perfect in this way, his deficiencies are made up by the consideration of Christ's obedience and righteousness imputed, and so God pronounces him justified; but not without including the sinner's goodwill and inclinations after holiness.

But the justification, wherewith the true God and Saviour justifies men by, hath nothing to do with the goodness of men or their cause, but simply declares them to be just; and he assigns no other reason for it, but his own sovereign good pleasure, in imputing the obedience and sufferings of his beloved Son, on all who believe, there is *no differ-*

* Some will allow, that justification, is a clearing from past sins; and others, that it means being acquitted from past and present too. But the truth is, that we are justified from the sins which are to come, in the same way as from past and present: "For without the shedding of blood (says Paul) there is no remission." Heb. ix. 22. These people must then expect remission some way else, and not by the blood of Jesus: for if they expected remission or justification in this way, and at the same time hold that justification does not in-

† Rom. v. 19.

difference; for all have *finned and come short of the glory of God*. And this sense of justification is also used on particular occasions amongst men, "The lawyers (says Leigh) call that a man's justification, which maketh neither the man nor his cause just, but declareth them to be just*." This answers to the state and condition of all men without distinction: for neither themselves nor their cause are good, having nothing to plead but the cause of sin; yea, *they are enemies to God by wicked works*, and are shut up under condemnation.

But notwithstanding this, God's love was so great, and his mercy superabounding, that he commended his love *towards sinners*; and while "they were *enemies and without strength*, Christ died for them†."

From the consideration of these last passages, with many more of the like import, it is most certain, that God's method of justifying man, is without the least regard to their works or qualifications. However, this definition of the term justification, may appear yet more forcible, by adding the apostolic decision of the matter, which is this: "Therefore (says he) we (the apostles) conclude, that a man is *justified by faith without the deeds of the law*‡." But

clude present and future sins, "then (as Paul says) must he (Christ) often have suffered since the foundation of the world." Heb. ix. 26. Paul, is quite express respecting the extent and perfection of Christ's sacrifice, in Chap. x. 10, 15, 18, "By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **ONCE FOR ALL**. By **ONE OFFERING** he hath **PERFECTED FOR EVER** them that are sanctified, (i. e. set apart.) Now were remission of these is, there is **NO MORE OFFERING FOR SIN**."

* Critica sacra, on the word *dikaïoma*, that is, justification, as in Rom. v. 16. 18.

† Rom. v. 6—10. ‡ Ibid iii. 28.

But having only as yet, defined the term justification in its nature and extent, when applied to a state of condemnation and wrath, it will be proper now, to shew the fitness of it from scripture, and the strict justice that there is in God, in thus clearing the guilty without respect to any thing in them, or wrought by them, either in times past, present, or to come.

God is, in the revelation of himself, represented as *perfectly holy*, infinitely so, without any variation or shadow of turning; and therefore cannot look upon sin with approbation, nor by any means clear the guilty. "*As I live, saith the Lord, the soul that sinneth shall die.*" And his justice shines with no less perfection than his holiness. Accordingly, he never fails to punish the continued transgressors of his perfect law, suppose they only come short in *one point**. Nor, on the other hand, the man who in all things comes up to the standard of righteousness and perseveres therein, never did, nor ever can, go unrewarded.

Of the former class there are many, even all the world; for the scripture says, *There is none righteous, no not one.* Then where are they of the latter sort to be found? I think I here some one say with the disciples on another occasion, "*Who then can be saved?*" "If there are none righteous in the world, and if God will not dispense with the least breach of his perfect law, then all hopes of mercy is for ever gone, and the whole world must inevitably be damned!" No; thanks be to God, this is not the case, though it might have justly been so; for God is not only perfectly holy and just, but he is also the perfection and fountain of love and mercy. "*† God is love. †*" Essentially so
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† *Ho Theos agape estin*, God is love, is as a certain writer observes, inimitable. "Nothing can be more
"sim-

* James ii. 10. † i. John iv. 16.

in himself, and relatively so to his chosen. For which reason, in perfect wisdom, he hath contrived a plan whereby he can, in full consistency and perfect harmony with all his other attributes, receive sinners into favour here, and at last, confer upon them the heavenly inheritance, which was prepared for them, from the foundation of the world. And this love, was only made manifest in its highest, deepest, longest, and broadest views, when he sent his *only begotten Son* from his bosom into the world, united to our nature, or *made in all things like unto his brethren*. As it is written: "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same: that, through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." And again, it is only in this his *beloved Son*, and only begotten, that all the divine perfections of God harmonize, in his taking the guilty into favour. Nor is the beauty, propriety, and strict justice of God, in justifying the ungodly, discovered any where else; for who in heaven or on earth, besides him*, could fulfil the *divine requirements* of the *divine law*, and *satisfy divine justice*? But more especially, what seraph or angel, could take upon him to suffer the divine wrath and vengeance due to sin, and have power to deliver himself from it, and merit enough by his obedience

"simple, yet nothing is more sublime. For my part I know not how to attempt an illustration of the noble sentiment. It strikes the mind as light strikes the eye. No art can make this more bright, and no paraphrase can make that more delicate, more majestic, more affecting."

* This was the only righteous person, in the strict sense of the word, that ever was on earth since the fall; and if ever we be counted righteous in God's sight it must be through his righteousness imputed.

to demand deliverance for the vilest of sinners who believe? But all these things were done and shone in the most conspicuous manner in the person of Jesus: "Who was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." "Who thought it no robbery to be equal with God. And though he were the great God, yet, he deaned to make himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was in the likeness of men †." And in this capacity he continued from his birth to his death; finishing the work which the Father gave him to do; for he was obedient unto death. The nature of the work of this servant, was, to fulfil the moral law in all its branches, and in the most perfect and divine extent to keep it. So that this law, which had been broken and dishonoured by man, might again be magnified and made honourable. This he did to the utmost extent, and under every unfavourable circumstance too: for the policy of hell, the rage of the devils, and the malice of men, were continually against him. "He was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin †." He vigorously passed on through these enemies untainted, and marched boldly on to endure the cross, and meet his last enemy, death; which was the consummation of his work, and to which he bore testimony before he gave up the ghost, saying, "*It is finished*||." He overcame this last enemy, death, or the king of terrors, with all the powers of the infernal world, and rose again the third day. Accordingly, what was prophecied of him before he came to this world in the flesh, was accomplished. "He will swallow up death in victory §" "O death! I will be thy plagues; O grave! I will be thy destruction ¶."

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* Heb. i. 3. † Phil. ii. 6, 7. ‡ Heb. iv. 15.
 § John xix. 31. ¶ Isa. xxv. 8. ¶ Hos. xiii. 14.

This servant so compleated his work, both in what he did and suffered, that he hath received tokens and declarations, which express the highest approbation and delight from God; both in the prospect of his performing this grand work, and after he had actually accomplished it in the days of his flesh. In the prospect of it, the prophet declares, "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake; he will *magnify the law*, and make *it honourable*.*." And who the term (he) relates to, we are told in the beginning of this same chapter: "Behold, my servant whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul is well pleased." Again, after he had made his appearance here on earth, when on the mount of transfiguration, attended with some of his disciples, we have this testimony: "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him* †."

At his baptism also, there was an undeniable testimony of the divine good-pleasure, in his Son's merits and excellency. And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased ‡." And after he had actually done and suffered these things which he undertook, and was appointed to do by the Father, he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the *resurrection from the dead* ||." He was not only raised from the dead, and demonstrated to be the Son of God, but his Father "exalted him with his own right hand, a prince and a saviour for to give *repentance* unto Israel, and *forgiveness of sins*; and hath given him a name

* Isai. xlii. 24. † Matth. xvii. 5, and ii. Pet. i. 16—18. ‡ Luke iii. 22. || Rom. i. 4.

"name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*."

How clear it is! from these two last passages, that he who thus became obedient unto death, and was exalted in this high manner, was God in our nature, or Emmanuel. For, who can forgive sins but God? and who can give repentance, but he who hath access to the human heart, by his spirit in the gospel? And therefore, unto whom should every knee bow, and tongue confess, but unto Jesus, whose name is above every name; and who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending saith the Lord, which is, which was, and which is to come; (*Ho pantokrator*) the Almighty, or omnipotent†."

From what hath been said, it is most certain, that the person and work of Jesus Christ were accepted of the Father; therefore it may be proper, next to enquire, for whom this work was accomplished, and whether "the death of Christ, was in no other sense a sacrifice, than as the death of an illustrious martyr, who died in the glorious cause of truth and virtue." I confess ingenuously, that it could have been no satisfaction to me, in the light which I view myself at present, to hear tell that Jesus spent a perfect life, for which he was highly honoured of God, and at last, on account of his virtue, and in the defence thereof, against wicked men, spilt his life's blood as a patron of devotion.

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* Acts v. 31, and Phil. ii. 9, 10. † Rev. i. 8.

To such masters of reason and virtue as Doctor Pr—y *, it certainly would be an aspiring account. And such, he, and others, have endeavoured to make of the history of the life and death of our Lord. But when I consider that the scripture informs me, that Jesus lived, while here on earth, to clothe the guilty with a righteousness in which they shall stand before God, and be esteemed spotless, and that he died to atone for, and make a perfect satisfaction to divine and offended justice for all sin, past, present, and to come; nothing can be more delightful to my ears, as a guilty wretch,

* The Doctor, speaking against the most capital of all truths, the necessity of an atonement and plenary satisfaction, says, "It can never be reconciled to equity, or answer any good purpose whatever, to make the innocent suffer the punishment of the guilty."

By comparing a passage of Paul's, with the above, and of nearly the same quantity of words, we may see how these two great men differ; and the reader must be left to determine for himself, which of the two authorities he shall abide by.

Paul says, "He (the Father) hath made (*epoiesen*, "constituted or ordained) him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." ii. Cor. v. 21.

Here we see, not only an innocent person reputed a sinner, but MADE SIN also; that is, sin itself. And we find him treated as such, when (as the prophet speaks) "He was bruised for our iniquities." But why was he thus treated? hearken ye ends of the earth, to the divine reason! namely, "That we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Another remarkable sentence of the SOCINIAN Doctor, is as follows: "If any of the Jews, (says he) had had the least notion of the necessity of any atonement for the sins of mankind, they could not but have expected a suffering Messiah; and yet, it is plain, the very best of them had no such idea." See triumph of truth, page 21,

wretch, destitute of all hopes of ever being saved by my virtue and good works. This is more harmonious to my soul, than all the music produced by nature or art; and more substantial bliss to my mind, than the whole world itself can afford: yea, it is the beginning of that joy which passeth all understanding; which no man can give, and no man take away. Let us attend then, to some passages, where these exhilarating and heart-renewing doctrines are set forth, in plain and striking language.

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With

22. But what of all this? does this prove that they had not a sufficient revelation of a suffering Messiah? surely it does not, no more than the Doctor's not being capable, or rather, perhaps, not being willing to see a suffering Jesus and a righteousness divine in the New Testament, proves that there are no such doctrines. If we measure the truth, according to the ideas which the Jews had of the Messiah, we shall have but little of the New Testament left. They never expected a Messiah that would erect a kingdom totally different from their's: nor did they expect that this kingdom should be governed by heavenly power, wisdom, and maxims; and the subjects of it, influenced by heavenly motives, inculcated by a heavenly prince; but rather they expected an earthly kingdom, to be defended by carnal weapons, and which might be accommodated to policy, and governed by the wisdom, traditions, and maxims of men. They had no idea, neither, of a Messiah that would cast contempt on all their devotion and worship—exalting only himself as worthy to be regarded, in opposition to all their renowned Rabbies and their traditions. Neither had they, in general, any ideas of one who should take such names and honours to himself, as should convey the idea of his being God, much less to esteem him as such. "Thou being a man (say they) makest thyself God." Upon the whole then, I think it appears plain, by examining the Doctor's notions with the Jews, that he is nearly as much disappointed in a Messiah as they were.

With respect to Christ's atonement for the sin of his chosen, we may first look into the liii. chapter of Isaiah, from the 4th to the 10th verse: "Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."

After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself*.

Again; if we turn our eyes to the brighter shining of the New Testament, there we shall find this capital truth, beaming forth from the full meridian of revelation. In the x. chapter of John, verse 11, Jesus declares himself to be the good shepherd: and he says, "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." Verse 15.

Paul says, "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification†." And again: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all‡." "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him||."

Now,

* Dan. ix. 26. † Rom. 4. 25. ‡ Ibid viii. 32.
|| ii. Cor. v. 21.

Now, is there nothing more in all these passages, but a mere account of the sufferings of a martyr, or one dying to seal the truth of his doctrine and piety? I think, those apostles who suffered death in the *glorious cause of truth and virtue*, may be allowed the feat of martyrs, and of the first rank too; yet, we never hear their death spoken of, as an atonement for sin, even not their own sin, much less the sin of others.

But it may be said, that "Jesus was the Son of God, and untainted with sin, being absolutely perfect, but the apostles were men of like passions with ourselves; therefore the death of Jesus was looked upon in a distinguished light from any other, but not as an atonement for sin." But if then, he was absolutely without sin, (which I believe he was) and had none transferred or imputed to him at the same time, how is it possible, that such an one should suffer from the Lord, as a punishment due to his sins? Where sin is not, there the Lord, consistent with his justice, cannot punish. Therefore, we must either affirm, that sin was *charged and laid upon Jesus*, or otherwise prove, that God did not punish him at all, as a transgressor. But *God did punish him*, but not for his *own sins*; for he was *without guile*, neither was *deceit found in his mouth*. And therefore the plain matter of fact, and undeniable conclusion, is, that sin was transferred and imputed to him. And so we read, "He was wounded for our transgressions, and with his stripes we are healed" "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin*."

D 3

Here

* Psalm xxxviii. 2, 3.

Here, Jesus owns* the sin of his people, and calls it his own; which was the reason of the *arrows of the Almighty* sticking fast in him. And whence proceeded his dreadful agony in the garden of Gethsemane; when *his soul was exceeding sorrowful*, even unto death? When his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground? When he prayed that the *cup of sorrow* might pass from him, if it were his Father's will? And lastly; when in that amazing language, he cried out with a loud voice, saying, *"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me †?"* All these sufferings came from God, which undoubtedly would have fallen upon us for ever, as the wages due to sin, "if *Jesus himself had not born them away in his own body on the tree ‡.*"

But now, those who believe, instead of these sufferings, receive the cup of salvation and thanksgiving—having the promise of God, "That, he will never leave them, nor forsake them||." This promise was fulfilled, both in the apostles, and those martyrs mentioned in the xi. chapter of Hebrews, and in every martyr since, who die in the *glorious cause of truth and virtue.* For they never were left to cry out, *my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* nor say, *my soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!* They met death with joy, because they knew, that Jesus by his sufferings, had taken away its sting; so that they triumphed in the midst of flames,

* This truth, runs as a golden vein, almost through the whole book of Psalms. Christ and the church, in this book, mutually change garments. He is called a sinner, through his taking their unrighteousness upon himself: and they are called righteous, through his righteousness being imputed to them.

† Matt. xxvii. 46. ‡ i. Pet. ii. 24. || Heb. xiii. 5.

flames, under the galling teeth of saws, and before the pointed sword: saying, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus.*"

Sin being thus taken away, by the shedding of Christ's blood, there is also a righteousness provided for the people of his love, arising from the merits of his death, and life, by which they stand complete before God, and have a legal right to sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb. This righteousness is called the righteousness of God; because it is every where commensurate with the purity of God's law and nature; and because, God himself, in our nature, wrought it out. Herein, is the beauty and propriety of God's taking the guilty into favour, and justifying the ungodly who believe. Because, neither holiness nor justice are infringed, but kept pure and unviolated. This atonement and divine righteousness, were the grand articles of the apostolic preaching, when they addressed the consciences of ignorant multitudes. And they proved that these doctrines were the mind of God, by the infallible and miraculous evidences which they had of the *resurrection of Christ from the dead*; unto which these doctrines directly point. Hence, Paul is said to be a setter-forth of strange gods, because he preached *Jesus and the resurrection*.

The truth of the *resurrection* of Jesus, gives life and power to every doctrine in the *Bible*; particularly those in the *New Testament*: "For if Christ be not risen, (says Paul) then is our preaching vain, and your faith vain †."

It is by the certainty of this glorious fact taking place in the soul, that this divine atonement and right-

* i. Cor. xv. 55, 56. † Ibid xv. 14.

righteousness are conveyed to the sinner as his own. And indeed, this is a very important point to know, whether Christ's righteousness and atonement are mine; or which way I am to receive well-grounded comfort from the same.

C H A P. IV.

WHAT I have hitherto said, may be considered as the general truth, or divine method and plan, exhibited in the word of revelation, by which God clears and justifies those that are condemned. But now, I would point this divine plan and general truth, to every man's conscience as in the sight of God, that they may examine themselves, and know, whether they have lot and part in this matter; and that others, who profess to have the same, may try, whether their hope and comfort are well grounded.

It is possible for people (and I know it to be the case with some) through the instructions of men, to reason themselves into the knowledge of this general truth, and yet be ignorant of it in their own experience. They may think it right, that God should clear the guilty for the sake of his Son—that Christ finished all for his people—that no one will ever be saved, but by what he hath done upon the cross, and at the same time, not believe it as the certain truth of God to themselves, by which they at present enjoy the consciousness of pardon and peace. They seem to know more of the truth for others than for themselves. The truth always appears to them at a vast distance: or in other words, the atonement appears to them, as a well furnished table of provisions, every way suited to the taste; but whether they have a right to partake, is the question. Or again; it may seem unto them, like unto a report of a plentiful importation of corn and other provisions, to a famined

famined island, given to a certain number of them, without describing the person, rank, or qualification of any in this starving condition; these being kept secret by the beneficent hand that sent the relief. Now each inhabitant, could only reason thus: "It is a great satisfaction to me, that I hear of plenty, but it is heightened when I consider, that possibly I may be one who shall share in the bounty; but whether I certainly shall or not, is not determined, which greatly damps my spirits; for what will it be to me, to believe there is a sufficiency, if after all, I perish in the midst thereof!"

It must indeed be allowed a real comfort to hear, that there is a sufficient righteousness and atonement for the guilty, by which, even an unbeliever may be kept from despair; but the comfort which the belief of the resurrection of Jesus brings to the soul, is not only, that there is a righteousness and atonement sufficient for sinners in general, but for me also as such. If it were not so, the gospel would not fully answer the demands of the guilty conscience, nor be equal to its wants: for what relief would it be to one who is on the borders of despair, through the sight that he hath of his own sinful character, and the inflexible justice and holiness of the great God, to be told that there was a possibility of his being saved, after having attended to the scripture *works of faith and labour of love*. This would not by far, answer the demands of his burdened mind; for after all his attempts and assiduous labours in this way, he could not help being slavishly alarmed with the *fear of being damned at last*.

But on the other hand, if he really believed the truth of the free proclamations of the gospel, to sinners, that *whosoever believeth his justified*, and shall never come into condemnation, he would find himself delivered from this spirit of bondage, and that, his gospel, as fully answered the demands of the guilty

guilty conscience, as Christ's death atoned for sin; and is as fully adequate to its wants, as Christ's obedience was to the divine law. So that no man can justly object against believing these things, on account of that scantiness which appears in the work of Jesus, and the declarations concerning the freedom thereof to the chief of sinners. To bring the matter to a point then, is this: Do you believe with the heart, that Jesus was raised from the dead, according to the evidence which God hath given of it in his word? And do you so understand the spiritual nature of this resurrection, that you find a sufficient atonement for your sins, and a righteousness to make you perfect, with life and immortality conveyed to your soul by the report thereof? Mistake me not, for I am not endeavouring to work up your mind into a fond and presumptuous assurance, that Christ died for you in particular, before you have a solid foundation for thinking so, from the divine testimony. The spirit of God by this same testimony, bearing witness with your spirit, that you are a son, and a joint heir with Christ.

Some think it faith, and the assurance of faith too, when they can persuade themselves from a strong desire of the mind, that Christ died for them; or by a strong act of the soul, by which (as they say) they *appropriate* Christ and all his benefits to themselves. A mighty act indeed! But the Apostles of the Lamb, whom I count better judges than they, represent faith in a far more simple, and yet more powerful light than this. They divest it of all acts and motions* whatever, and make

* In point of our acceptance with God, in the matter of justification, but after this, they represent faith, as being productive of every good word and work; and followed by acts of sound devotion, and clothed with the motions of obedience and profound humility.

make it to be the simple belief, of the simple truth, which they simply and undisguisedly declared, concerning Christ and his resurrection from the dead. Thus Paul proceeds to bring this matter of importance to an issue, in the minds of his hearers at Antioch*; after having gradually led their minds from God's manner of dealing with the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan, and from that, to David their king, who was a type of Jesus, from whose line, according to the flesh, Jesus came.—Then he leads them to the preaching and mission of John the baptist, who was the forerunner of Jesus: and at length he comes to Jesus, and says, “When the Jews had *fulfilled all that was written* of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre, (mark the apostle’s exultation) *but God raised him up from the dead.*” The truth and certainty of which resurrection, he proves from the agreement of the prophecy of it, in the ii. and iii. Psalms, with the fact which then took place, which he, and the rest of the apostles, were eye witnesses of. This truth, is what he calls GOOD NEWS, or GLAD TIDINGS. Hence he says, “Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this person† is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins*: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could be not be justified by the law of Moses.” This is bringing the matter to an issue indeed! for either we are at this time disbelieving these truths, and so justly condemned of God, or we are viewing the suitableness and beauty of them to our own souls—believing them, and so are justified from all guilt. The apostle Peter, preaches the same truth, in

* Acts 13.

† I put *person*, instead of *man*, because the word *man* is not in the original.

in chapter x. He first proves the resurrection, (as Paul does) for he says, they (the apostles) eat and drank with him, after he rose from the dead: and then, he as it were, calls in all the prophets, to vouch the same ever memorable and blessed doctrine. To him (that is Jesus) gave all the prophets witness, that through his NAME WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in him, shall receive the remission of sins.

It will be proper to note another particular passage to our purpose; and that is, in our Lord's discourse to Nicodemus, where he illustrates our present point of regeneration to this ruler of the Jews, by setting forth his own resurrection under the *similitude* of the *brazen serpent*, which Moses erected on a pole in the wilderness, that by looking unto it, the children of Israel might be healed of the bite which they had received from the fiery flying serpents, as a judgment for their murmuring against God.

In like manner our Lord tells us, he himself was lifted up, "That WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM, should not perish, but have everlasting life."

What was it that made the children of Israel look to the brazen serpent, but because God had ordered it, and promised, that by it they should live? And are we not all by nature, stung by the old serpent the devil? yes, we are, whether we believe it or not. And what can cure the mortal and dreadful wound, but looking unto Jesus: "Beholding him as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world?"

And again; what gives us right, and affords us a solid foundation for looking or believing on the risen Jesus? and to say, he died for me—he rose that I might live? surely not our own qualifications or inherent righteousness! surely not our sensibility of sin, or the motions of our heart towards good! no; but our sure and solid ground

for these is, because God hath given his word and oath, *that whosoever believeth on Jesus, shall not be ashamed.* “This is the precious corner-stone, and “sure foundation laid in Zion*.” The Israelites had nothing in them, or about them, that could afford them a sure reason of hope for life, after they were stung: but on the contrary, what they felt from the serpent, afforded them a sure token of death, until they, from what God had said by Moses, simply looked on the brazen serpent, which was entirely without them, being a thing, publicly set up in the camp. So, every sinner, that ever was, or ever will be saved, is saved by that which was done without him—finished upon the cross, without the gates of Jerusalem, and simply believed by him: “For it is the will of God, that *every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life †.*”

Again; we have from these passages already quoted, not only a sure foundation for looking and believing on the *risen Jesus*, but also, for saying, he died for me; because we find in them such phrases as these: *By him ALL that believe are justified, &c.*—*WHOSOEVER believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.*—*WHOSOEVER believeth in him shall not perish*—*WHOSOEVER believeth on Jesus, shall not be ashamed.*—*EVERY ONE which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, &c.* Now these proclamations are so general to men of all ranks and characters, that they exclude none, but testify unto them, that if they believe on Jesus, they shall be saved. They do not in the least hint of any qualifications in the sinner, as being necessary to warrant him to believe: the only warrant is, God’s saying *WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH, &c.* According to modern times, these passages should have been thus: “Whosoever is humbled, contrite, sensible
E “of

* Isaiah xxviii. 16. † John vi. 40.

“ of his sins, and who desires above all things to be
 “ interested in Christ, if you are well assured that
 “ this is the case with you, believe, and be saved.”
 It is easy to see, that if the gospel had been thus
 worded, it could not be called a free gospel, as in
 such a case, it would only bear its benign aspect to
 some distinguishing characters. I could not say to
 my fellow sinner, the gospel is as free for you as
 for me, unless I saw some change in him to good:
 and if I could not do this, the gospel cannot be
 said to be free, nor good news to the guilty. But
 what does Paul say to Timothy? he says, “ It is
 “ a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the
 “ world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Here
 Paul, not only declares the comfortable truth that
 Christ died for sinners in general, but that he died
 for himself also as such. He leaves no room for
 us to suppose that he knew that Christ died in
 particular for him, from his becoming a better
 man, or from any supposed good marks and signs
 of repentance within; for while he thus views
 the sacred victim being offered up to God for him,
 at the same time, he sees himself the chief of sin-
 ners, of whom (says he) *I am chief*, (now at this
 present time.) Therefore, to be coolly and ratio-
 nally, as well as scripturally assured before God,
 that Christ died for me, doth not at all suppose a
 sinless state of perfection. No; the most guilty it
 seems, may be assured through faith in Jesus. Nor
 do we stand in need of an articulate and aud-
 ible voice from heaven, to declare our part in
 Christ’s death. Neither can we blame the scriptures
 as being deficient in this point, because our parti-
 cular name and surname, are not mentioned there:
 for all the advantages which would flow from these
 being found in scripture, in point of assurance, are
 made up to us, equally as strong and evident, if
 not more so, by other means which God hath been
 pleased to ordain for that purpose. First; the in-
 fallibility of his word, in his proclamations of
 pardon

that my own justification and salvation, is as fully ascertained to my conscience, as the truth of the fact of the resurrection is itself; or that Christ died and rose again for the justification of any one sinner.

If that popular and leading man among the Quakers, Mr. *Robert Barclay*, had known and experienced this truth, we should not have heard such *blasphemy* as is contained in the following words; where he is endeavouring to undermine the absolute necessity of the knowledge of scripture history, in order to the knowledge of salvation, and introduce, what he calls a more sure way, if not the only way; namely, the workings of the spirit, without regard to revelation. His words are these: "Moreover, that which of all is most needful for him to know, to wit, whether he really be in the faith, and an heir of salvation, or no, the scripture can give him no certainty in, neither can it be a rule to him."

I would ask then, what can be a *rule* to me? and what it is, which conveys the knowledge of salvation to my soul, if the scriptures do not? Can his secret spirit do it? He answers in the affirmative in several places, but I am persuaded it cannot. It may indeed give some kind of knowledge, but it can only be a deception; for the true spirit of God, only breathes by the written word which he dictated. So our Lord promised to his disciples, before he left this world; that *the spirit should guide them into all truth*. This divine agency, never once in scripture, operates in any other mode, respecting matters of salvation. The prophets were inspired of God, but it was, that they might declare, in human language, the mind of God to the people. And which way did the prophets themselves understand God? They understood him by *dreams, visions, voices, and hieroglyphick forms*, from which they gathered their ideas of the truth, and the Holy Ghost prevented them from misunderstanding

ing these forms, and kept them impressed upon their mind, that they might not lose them. So that it is most clear, that both prophets and people, were taught in an ideal form, and not by infusion, or without ideas.

When we come down to the apostles, we find them taught, in a miraculous way, the knowledge of different languages; to the intent, that they might communicate ideas of the truth, to various countries. But why all this! if men were wrought upon by the spirit, without regard to the principles of rationality, and ideas of scripture truth! According to this Paul might have stood up, and spoken in the Hebrew language, to a company of Grecians, and exhorted them to *follow the light within*, and it might have answered the same end as if he had spoken in Greek.

God could, and might, have brought his people to glory, without any written revelation, merely by inward operations, without any rational ideas conveyed thereby: but then, at the same time, I firmly believe, this could not be, considering things as they really are; both with respect to our natural constitution before the fall, and our condition and state, after the fall. These must have been different from what they are now; for as we are, the word of revelation, seems, yea, is absolutely necessary, as being most suited to our internal frames as rational beings. We could not, in our present situation, being now, since the fall, placed unavoidably in the midst of *error* and *delusion*, distinguish truth from falsehood, without the *medium* of a written word, addressed to our reasoning powers; whereby we know, what is from God, and what from the devil, and our own wicked imaginations. Hence John addresses the church, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Chap. iv. 1-6. He also in the 6th verse shews them what the

standard of truth is: "We (the apostles) are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth us not. Hereby know we (*ginoskomen, or distinguish we*) the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

There is therefore, no salvation for any who do not with all their souls, adhere to the apostolic doctrine; much less for those who despise and condemn the written testimony of God. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record* (testimony or witness) that God gave of his Son†." This record, testimony, or witness, which every believer hath in himself, is no other than the word of God, the incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth for ever, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

He farther adds, as an argument against the certainty of scripture about one's own salvation, "I find the promises, I find the threatenings in the scripture; but who telleth me that the one belongeth to me more than the other? The scriptures give me a mere declaration of these things, but make no application; so that the assumption must be of my own making, thus;

* The word *marturia*, signifies, a testimony, record or witness. "It signifies to witness a thing with clear, perspicuous, and plain words; openly and seriously to affirm something, and to confirm it by a public profession."—Leigh's *Critica sacra*. That this word (record) means the written word, is farther evident from what John says in his gospel, chap. xix. 35, where he is speaking of the crucifixion of Jesus, he says, "And he that saw it bare record, and his (*marturia*) record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."

† i. John v, 20.

“as for example: I find this proposition in the
 “scripture; he that believeth shall be saved:
 “thence I draw the assumption, but I *Robert Bar-*
 “*clay* believe; therefore I shall be saved. The
 “minor is of my own making, and not expressed
 “in scripture; and a human conclusion, not a
 “divine position; so that my faith and assurance
 “here, is not built upon a scripture proposition,
 “but upon a human principle; which unless I be
 “sure of *elsewhere*, the scripture gives me no cer-
 “tainty in the matter*.”

Mr. *Barclay*, from these words, discovers him-
 self, at the time when he wrote them, to be an
 unbeliever: for had he believed the promises and
 threatenings, in the scripture light of them, he
 would have found as much reason for believing
 the one as the other; or in other words, for be-
 lieving justification by the righteousness of Jesus,
 and forgiveness through his *name*, as for believing
 the threatenings of God's curse due to sin.

I would ask, why it is, that men are so apt to take
 the threatenings to themselves, and put the pro-
 mises far from them? except on these two accounts:
 first; most men are conscious of guilt, and have
 some natural dread about the punishment due to
 it; therefore when they read, or hear the scrip-
 ture, that part of it which threatens sinners, ap-
 plies itself to them, and they cannot but own they
 are guilty. Secondly; all men being destitute of
 righteousness sufficient to challenge the perfection
 of *deity*, and finding, after all their attempts after
 perfection, some remains of sin charging them,
 they cannot but doubt, whether the promises be-
 long to them. So it seems, this gentleman had
 found the scriptures without any thing more, suf-
 ficient to certify him and others of wrath and con-
 demnation,

* See Mr. *Barclay's* apology. Proposition 3d,
 page 77.

demnation, even without his particular name being mentioned; but as to the knowledge of one's own salvation and justification, attended with joy and peace arising therefrom, this, he asserts the scriptures cannot give, *but are a mere declaration of these things, but make no application.* But why do they make no application? The answer is obvious because they are not believed? For whenever these things are received as the very, and eternal truths of God, they effectually work*.

Again; is it not a truth, that he that believeth shall be saved? If then I believe this, according to its full meaning and import, as the Holy Ghost, hath in other scriptures illustrated it, surely I must have a sufficient ground for believing, that in God's own time and way, I, who thus *believe*, shall be saved. For is not the latter part of the proposition, as true and infallible as the former? for he that gives this universal proclamation, by the indefinite term HE, not only declares by it, that all kinds of sinners may believe, but that all kinds of sinners who do *believe*, shall be saved. Therefore, Mr. Barclay is wrong in his logic; for the assumption or minor, is not drawn from the persuasion that I believe, but from the authority of the speaker, and the infallibility of his word, being God who cannot lie.

The above gentleman's manner of conclusion, is formed, as if we believed that the scriptures afford us such premises as these: the Pharisees confidently called God their father, and themselves the favourites of heaven; therefore we draw the assumption, that God was really so; while Jesus at the same time, confidently affirmed, "They were of their father the devil †." Now in this instance, the minor was of their own making; for they had no scripture right to call God so. But when God declareth

* Thess. ii. 13. † John viii. 41, 44.

declareth, that he who believes shall be saved, the assumption is of God's own making, and not drawn from the good opinion the believer has of his own state or character, but because God hath said it. So that the believer has no occasion to seek *elsewhere* for the divine assurance of his own salvation, (as our Author would suggest) for like Abraham, the father of the faithful, he is *fully persuaded**, that what God hath promised, he is "able also to perform.†."

It is this looking somewhere else, rather than to the scriptures for the knowledge of salvation, that makes so many professors of religion, go without this inestimable blessing: for not being satisfied with the record that God hath given of his Son, they are continually looking for assurance elsewhere—some after dreams and visions, others after voices and secret whisperings, sudden alarms and extraordinary operations: all which, are the effects of the doctrine of such men† who direct their hearers

* In Hebrews x. 22, the same word is translated full assurance. "*Plerophoreo* is (says a learned man) "a metaphor borrowed from ships which are carried "with full sail, and signifies a most certain persuasion "of the truth." See then this pattern and father of the faithful! how his faith carries him to mount Moriah, to sacrifice his Son! because God commanded it. "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even "from the dead." Ibid xi. 19. And behold his faith which prevented his staggering at the promise of God that he should have a Son! though there were no natural probability of its coming to pass—"His own body, "and Sarah's womb, being dead." Rom vi. 19.

† Romans iv. 21.

‡ I would not be understood, as though I meant to confine the charge of such kind of doctrines to Mr. *Barclay*

hearers to wait and, expect something more than the scriptures, to give them the knowledge of salvation. When *Dives* requested an extraordinary work from Abraham, that he should send Lazarus from the dead, to convince his five brethren of their folly, the answer to him was: "*They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.*" But our answer to such who require any thing but the plain testimony, may be more copious; for now they have not only Moses and the prophets, but also our Lord Jesus and his apostles: and if they will not hear them, "*neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*" Some require a sign, and others wisdom; but what saith Paul? "Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) or, who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring Christ again from the dead) but what saith it? THE WORD IS NIGH THEE, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith which we

clay and his friends, the Quakers; for we need not but to go to Mr. *Wesley* and his friends, the Methodists, and we shall both hear and see the effects of the same doctrine. Many may be found amongst them, who are seeking some particular and inward revelation, distinct from the outward word, in order that they may know the forgiveness of their sins; the pursuit of which, seems to be the spring of their devotion, and the ruling motive in all their worship, from time to time. If any one speaks of the absolute necessity of understanding the written word, in order to salvation, and of deriving all comfort and joy from what God hath spoken in his word, they are ready to condemn him for denying the word of the spirit, and brand him with names of their own devising. But what better can we expect from the people while they are led by the influence of the following doctrine, advanced by their principle leader? In describing

“preach. That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart a man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

But here, I wish, I may not be charged by the disaffected, with denying the work of the spirit, as I have before hinted. And therefore I would have such people know, that whenever I see things in a poor sinner, which afford me ground to think he's a believer, I immediately ascribe it to God, or the effects of the teaching of the spirit.—And I would likewise have them to know, that whenever I hear a man, however eminent in the eyes of the world, lay claims to the spirit's work in the most confident manner, if he does not pay due regard to assert as confidently, that the *divine spirit* is perfectly consonant with the word, and that he teaches

cribing the effects of the regenerated, he says, “His ears being opened, he is now capable of hearing the INWARD VOICE OF GOD, saying be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.” At the close of this sermon, he also exhorts the unregenerate thus: “Let this therefore, if you have not already experienced this INWARD WORK OF GOD, be your continual prayer: Lord, add this to all my blessings, let me be born again.” See sermons on several occasions, by Mr. Wesley, pages 32, 42. Here are two things which have a bad tendency, and directly oppose the apostolic doctrines. First; the apostles never directed their hearers to look for an inward voice, but to believe the report of the gospel. Second; they never taught the unregenerate to pray, knowing that without it is impossible to please God: therefore Peter said to Simon Magus, Repent, (i. e.) believe, and pray to God, &c. Acts viii. 22.—James i. 6.

* Romans x. 6—10.

teaches no other things than Moses and the prophets said should come—that he works by no other means than by the written word, I consider all his claims and experience, in the light that Paul speaks in his ii. epistle to the Thessalonians. “As a *strong delusion*, that he should *believe a lie*. That *he may be damned*, who believeth not the truth, *but hath pleasure in unrighteousness.*” Ver. 11, 12. It is the uniform language of the New Testament, in those passages where the disciples are said to be regenerated, that it was effected, not only by the spirit, but the word also: and that the grand matter which this word contains and constantly refers to, is the fact of the *resurrection of Jesus*.

Peter very beautifully and concisely, describes these three fundamental things, that is to say, The work of God upon the soul; the fact of the resurrection; and the word, by which, the knowledge of this fact is conveyed to the soul. “Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath *begotten us again* unto a (zoan) living hope, *by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*—*Being born again*, not of corruptible seed, but *of incorruptible*, by the word of God, which liveth *and abideth for ever*. And this is the word which *by the gospel is preached unto you.*”

CH A P. V.

HAVING now set forth the first blessing of regeneration, or the doctrine of justification in its several branches, and the way by which it is effected, it will be proper next, to go on to shew what the second blessing or part is, as proposed in the 15th page, chap. iii.

The

The first part relates to man after the fall, and is of a privative nature, taking away guilt and damnation due to it: but this second part or blessing of regeneration, which is at present to be considered, respects the state of man before the fall. In other words, the first is what God hath done for his people by his Son, while they were enemies; but the second is what God worketh in them by his spirit, after they have with the heart believed unto righteousness. And as the first comes to them while they are enemies, and discovers to them that God is well pleased for his Son's sake; so the second comes to them while they are friends, to prepare them for heaven, and transform them into the likeness of God.

To use a similitude:—A prince transgresses the laws of his father, for which he is sent to prison; but sometime after, his father and sovereign, is excited to mercy, and sends a messenger with a written account of his pardon, sealed by his own hand. The exiled prince peruses the contents of the writing, and knows his father's hand; finding it to contain, not only a free discharge of his offences, but full liberty granted him to visit his father and enjoy his presence; with a promise to all the blessings he can possess him with, and every honour that can be conferred upon him. But during the time of his imprisonment, I suppose him to have lost the court language and manners, by being corrupted through his fellow prisoners, and thereby reduced to a state of rudeness and peasantry; so that it becomes necessary for him to be instructed again into the court language, dialect, and fashions, before he can enjoy the presence of his father, and the company which he now has a right to. So likewise, when a sinner is justified through the knowledge of the finished work of Jesus, he is free from the condemnation of the law, and shall not come into condemnation.

F

But

But though he be thus freed from the bondage of the law, wherein he was held, and has a right by promise, to the heavenly inheritance;—and though he stand compleat in Christ, in the imputative sense, as soon as he believes, yet, there are higher blessings to be communicated to him than simply justification; by which blessings of *divine life, love, and grace*, his soul is enlarged gradually for the enjoyment of this heavenly inheritance, which is *God himself in open vision and perfect glory*. Some writers have made regeneration to consist of nothing more than justification; while others have left justification by faith in Jesus, without the deeds of the law, as unconcerned with it. These last represent the new birth as prior to justification, so that a man may be born of God, and not in a state of justification; supposing justification to be a fruit thereof, or a state attained to, only by their obedience. But the scriptures never countenance any such doctrines; for they always speak of justification as the *very first blessing* of regeneration and that before this, a man is in a state of condemnation. “He that believeth not is *condemned already*, because he hath *not believed* in the name of the only begotten Son of God*.”

From this passage, and many others that might be cited, it is clear, that there is no such thing as regeneration before justification; and it is equally as clear, that there is no justification prior to believing the report and record of God concerning his Son. A state of regeneration and condemnation cannot go together; neither can a state of justification and unbelief go together, or coincide with each other. The former of these are but very few indeed, who begin with regeneration before justification; some of whom, are to be highly esteemed for their work's sake; but it is certain the

* John iii. 18.

they are deficient in this respect, in not leading our minds beyond justification, to that *more abundant life which is in Jesus Christ*. This is that life which Adam himself, even while in a state of innocence and moral rectitude, was ignorant of: for as there was no revelation of this *celestial life*, nor the openings of the Father's bosom of eternal love and infinite delight, resting upon, and shining in, the person of his Son; therefore it was not possible that Adam should know these, and consequently not enjoy them. And I believe, I may venture to say more, and that is, if Adam had been favoured with a revelation of these exalted truths, he would not have received them, without a change of nature being passed upon him; for Paul tells us, *He was of the earth, earthy*. Now therefore it was impossible that he could enjoy the Father in his fulness, without a special union to the Lord Jesus from heaven, the *quickening spirit*: "For as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly†." From these circumstances, it may appear to the impartial mind, that Adam stood in need of regeneration, and that the same words which Jesus uttered with all solemnity to Nicodemus, might have been in truth, spoken to Adam.

F 2

—*Verily,*

* It may be objected here, that Paul is shewing the nature of the resurrection at the last day, and not regeneration. I believe so; but you will allow, that Paul speaks also of the nature in which they rise, namely, Christ's, the second Adam: for he is not speaking of all mankind, but of believers only, when he says, "As we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;" that is, in body: for in their intellectuals they bore the image of Christ already, in some measure; but then, both soul and body shall be raised in full perfection.

† i. Cor. xv. 48.

—*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man (or any one) be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

But the work of regeneration, had not so much to effect in Adam, as in Nicodemus; Adam had no sin to be taken away, being morally upright; and therefore he would not have stood in need of justification, but the whole would have consisted in communicating divine knowledge and life to his soul, in that way which would have seemed good to God. But Nicodemus was a son of the fall—a sinner, in thought, word, and action; under the curse, and liable to eternal damnation; and therefore regeneration had two things to effect in him, namely, forgiveness of sins, and the *knowledge and experience* of the character of the Father in his *divine fulness to his chosen*.

Another great and fatal error amongst writers on this subject is, that they have no idea of regeneration, but as it simply stands opposed to moral turpitude. So when these writers, or preachers, have set their readers and hearers into a fair way (as they suppose) for fulfilling the moral law, then they think this great work is likely to be done, if not done already. Accordingly we have one asking us this question: “Does the sinner when he is
“converted to God, receive any new natural
“powers? Is he made a natural new creature?
“Or is he not a moral new creature, having the
“same natural powers he had before his conver-
“sion, only rectified by divine grace; or in other
“words, being effectually persuaded and inclined,
“to use his natural powers in a different manner,
“and for different purposes, from what he did
“before?”

That regeneration has the effect of persuading and inclining the sinner to use his natural powers in a different manner, and for different purposes, from what he did before, is a truth that cannot reasonably be disputed; but to say these are regenera-
tion

tion itself, is as unscriptural, as it would be absurd to say, that those things which are produced by the heat of the sun, are a part of the sun itself. The scriptures do not use the phrase, *moral new creature*, nor any of the like sense, when they speak of what men are by regeneration, but they say, he is a *spiritual new creature*; or which is the same thing, "*Born of the spirit*." And though I firmly believe, the sinner when converted, receives no new natural powers, yet, I as firmly believe, he receives new spiritual powers; or how could he be said to be "*A new creature*? and that, with him, old things "are past away, behold, *all things are become new**." Therefore as they are new creatures, they receive new life, not the old life a little reformed. And the difference between the *old* and *new life*, is as different as the life which was in Adam, and that which was, and is, in Christ. "Howbeit that was "not first which is spiritual, but that which is "*natural*; afterward that which is *spiritual*†."

This way indeed, of talking of regeneration as being *mere moral rectitude*, (however it may be enforced by what they please to call gospel principles) doth suit the notions of the natural sons of Adam: for as their father lived (as long as his life lasted) by his obedience, in the garden of Eden, being a perfectly, upright, *moral man*; so we all naturally, have the like ideas, and think of gaining the favour of God, and living by what we do, can, or intend to perform, at some convenient period. This is very commonly taken for regeneration, after passing through a little refinement. Consequently, they confine the new birth to a state of sin only; or think, if sin had not been introduced, regeneration would have been quite unnecessary. They talk about this doctrine, as if we were only to go back from whence we come, namely, to the garden of

F 3

Eden;

* ii. Cor, vi 17.

† i. Cor. xv. 46.

Eden; or to be restored to that happiness and enjoyment which Adam had in innocence. Then indeed, regeneration would only be a privation of guilt, and a restoration of moral uprightness, preparing the person for the enjoyment of the new earth, *wherein dwelleth righteousness*. But this, merely in itself, is far short of scripture regeneration; which proceeds entirely from God himself, and is beyond human conception; being a communication of the life and spirit of Christ to the soul, by which it is *raised from a death of trespasses and sin*. The way in which the generallity of teachers and writers speak of the new birth, is to represent it within the compass of man's power. Hence they propose to the sinner, what he is to do, in the way of co-working with God, to bring this work about: and this exactly agrees, with calling regeneration moral rectitude, as it stands opposed to *moral turpitude*. Such ideas of it, are earthy, carnal, and from beneath, as well as foolish; for whoever imagined, that he had any concern in begetting himself; or co-worked with his father, in natural generation. But the scriptures are quite full to the point, in shewing that men have as *little concurrence in the great affair of regeneration*. John tells us how it comes. "Not of blood, (says he) nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*." James says, "Of his own will, begot he us with the word of truth†."

It may not be improper, next to give a short view of the preaching of one of the most renowned men in the religious world, on this subject; which may serve to confirm the truth of our observation on the last mentioned teachers.

Speaking of regeneration, he says, "It must be owned indeed, that this is a *great and difficult work*, but blessed be God, it is not impossible. " Many

* John i. 13. † James i. 18.

“Many thousands of happy souls have been *assisted*
 “by *divine power to bring it about*, and why should
 “we despair of success? *It is a task* likewise, that
 “will put us to some pain; it will oblige us to part
 “with some lust, to break with some friend, &c.
 “but what of all this? Will not the being made a
 “real living member of Christ, a child of God,
 “and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven,
 “*abundantly make amends for all this trouble?* Un-
 “doubtedly it will*.”

One would almost think, this teacher of Israel and leader of thousands, had never read the New Testament, much less to examine it with seriousness and attention, when we hear such doctrine as this. Nor do I think, that Nicodemus himself, would have found fault with any thing contained in the above quotation; but rather have acknowledged it to be the very same doctrine in effect, which he taught in *Moses' seat*.

Let us suppose this ruler of the Jews to have ascended the *venerable seat of Moses* †, dressed in his long robes, and spreading abroad his phylacteries; surrounded by an auditory of *heathens, publicans and harlots*; and what shall we suppose him to advance, in order to make proselytes of them, if we attend to what the scripture speaks of the doctrine of his party? (the Pharisees.) Surely it would be nearly in the following strain. “I am
 “now to set before you at this opportunity, the
 “God of Israel; whom you abominable persons
 “are ignorant of, and by whom you are accursed
 “*who know not the law* ‡; and except you will be-
 “come the disciples of Moses, the gates of Paradise
 “will be shut up against you, neither will Abra-
 “ham

* See Mr. George Whitfield's sermons on regeneration, in his collection, pages 285, 286.

† Matt. xxiii. 2, 5. ‡ John vii. 49.

“ ham our father receive you into his bosom. You
 “ must also, not only become the disciples of Mo-
 “ ses, but you must receive the traditions of the
 “ elders*, the great commentators of our law.

“ But how can you receive the yoke of our law,
 “ who are perverse and born of fornication, and
 “ others of you *gluttonous persons and wine bibbers*.
 “ Now, before you can come to this *holy place*, with-
 “ out polluting it, and before you can be received
 “ of us, you must renounce all these; for we are
 “ the favourites of heaven, having established our
 “ characters before God and among men, as *devout*,
 “ *righteous, and honourable*†. And therefore, that
 “ you may become one of us, it will be necessary
 “ for you to separate yourselves from the *people of*
 “ *the earth*, and to have no trade with the wicked.
 “ In a word, you must distinguish yourselves from
 “ all other men in *devotion and zeal*, by fasting and
 “ alms giving, and in making long prayers; so that
 “ you may with confidence and justice too, come
 “ before God in the temple, and give him *thanks*,
 “ *that you are not what you were, nor like other men*‡.
 “ It must be owned indeed, that this is a great
 “ work for you, and very difficult, but thank
 “ God, it is not impossible; for many of the Hea-
 “ then, *through our compassing sea and land*||, have
 “ been assisted by divine power to bring these
 “ things about; and why should you despair of
 “ success. It is a task indeed that will put you to
 “ some pain, both in the rite of circumcision and
 “ parting with your old friends. But what of all
 “ this? will not the being made a child of God,
 “ and an inheritor of Abraham’s bosom, and to
 “ be much *honoured and saluted by men, for your*
 “ *religion*§, make amends for all this trouble?
 “ Undoubtedly it will.”

If

* Matt. xv. 2. † Rom. x. 3. ‡ Luke xviii. 10.
 || Matt. xxiii. 15. § Ibid xxiii. 7.

If the attentive enquirer, will look at these passages noted in the margin, and their parallels, I hope, he will be convinced that I have made Nicodemus say nothing but what was agreeable to the doctrine of the Pharisees; and that the last mentioned gentleman's doctrine, with many others of the like mind, differs not materially from the doctrine of the ancient Pharisees, except in the use of some terms. And if it might not be a wandering from the subject, I would just remark, that it is a mistaken notion of many, when they are describing the character of the Pharisees in our Lord's time, to suppose their whole conduct in religious matters, was directed by mere ostentation and show. This was a part of their character indeed; but if Paul's* record be true, both of himself and his kinsmen according to the flesh, it is plain, they had a zeal for God too, but not according to knowledge. Yea, Paul says of himself, he was zealous toward God, even while he was persecuting unto death, those that followed Jesus†. So that we must not think to find real Pharisees, merely among the inactive and outwardly decent of the religious world; such as the formal and lifeless church of England, and the dry presbyterians of Scotland. The Methodists it is true, give them this name, (except a part of those who attend them) but it is in general not just; for it was the character of the ancient Pharisees, to compass sea and land, to make one proselyte, though he was made thereby, doublefold more a child of hell‡. But the church of England *ministers*, will hardly step over the threshold to preach a sermon, and not that, without being well paid for it. The Pharisees had a zeal for God, and earnestly defended their doctrines; but these men have no zeal for
God,

* Rom. x. 2. and Phil. iii. 5, 6. † Acts xxii. 3.
‡ Matt. xxiii. 15.

God, neither with, nor without knowledge; and if they get but a warm comfortable living, they are heedless what doctrines go foremost. The Pharisees used to make long prayers, and most likely extempore ones too; but it is altogether problematical whether they ever pray at all (even in their own way) excepting when they are obliged by public call, and then, how do they perform it? Not as though they were in earnest. They do indeed, approach near to the Pharisees in some respects, by wearing long robes, and loving to be called of men, Rabbi, or which is the same thing, master of arts, or doctor. Therefore, let the Methodists look to themselves.

I hope, no one will think, that I am glorying over these men in their ignorance, God forbid! far be it ever from me—I am only bearing an honest testimony against their errors, as far as God hath been pleased to teach me from his word, out of real friendship, but not of hatred. I would ever be sensible of my own weakness and liableness to err; and if I be favoured with a knowledge of the truth, may all the glory be ascribed to God only; who maketh fools wise, and bringeth to nothing the wisdom of this world. And while I would contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, I wish to maintain real affection and love, and to *shew all meekness to all men*; for all who believe, have reason to adopt Paul's words to Titus: "For
 " we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, dis-
 " obedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and plea-
 " sures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and
 " hating one another. But after that *the kindness*
 " *and love of God our Saviour towards man appeared,*
 " *not by works of righteousness which we have done,*
 " but according to his mercy he saved us by the
 " washing of regeneration, and renewing of the
 " Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly,
 " through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that, being
 " *justified by his grace,* we should be made heirs
 " according

“according to the hope of eternal life*.” This passage includes my whole view of regeneration, and brings us to our subject again. It contains the two great things, under which I have considered this important doctrine. First; justification without the deeds of the law, or as it is phrased in the text, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done*. Second; the renewing of the Holy Ghost, figuratively styled, *The washing of regeneration*. And we may observe these two parts, to be common in the language of the New Testament. When it speaks of the first part, it uses such phrases as these: “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God†.” “As many as received him, to them he gave power, or privilege, to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name‡.” “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus||.”

When it speaks of the second part, or the new nature which the saints are made partakers of, it uses such phrases as these: “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATURE§.” “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, abba. Father¶.” “If any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE: old things are past away, behold, all things become new**.” “Except a man be born of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven††.” The saints are also said on this account, to be temples of the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in them—to be sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise. Yea, Christ himself, is said to be formed in them the hope of glory—to live in them, and be their life‡‡. But

* Titus iii. 2—6, 9. † i. John v. 1. ‡ John i. 12. § Gal. iii. 26. ¶ Ibid vi. 15. ¶ Ibid iv. 6, and Rom. viii. 15. ** ii Cor. v. 17. †† John iii. 5. ‡‡ i. Cor. iii. 16, Eph. i. 13, and Gal. ii. 20.

But this new nature and life, is not by sudden inflation or emotion, but it is gradual; and increases according to our knowledge of the divine will as it is revealed in his word. Justification, is an immediate act of God towards the sinner; for no one can be more compleatly justified than when he first believes: but this celestial life, is a progressive work of God, and continues till we are fully ripe for the kingdom of God. So that under this view, regeneration may be said to be, both instantaneous and progressive. The means that are ordained of God, for the carrying on, and maintaining this divine growth, are all the ordinances of Christ's house; particularly sincere attention to the word, &c prayer. So we find these to be the effects of believing, in all those mentioned in the acts of the apostles, who were the very first fruits of the spirit, after the resurrection. "Then they
 "that gladly received the word, were baptized.
 "And they continued stedfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread
 "and in prayer*." Here is first, *receiving the word gladly*; and then, those who thus received the word, were baptized (that is, *ebaptisthesan*, were dipped) in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And thirdly; a strict adherence to the apostle's *doctrine and fellowship*, or meeting together in one heart and soul, to commemorate the Lord's death, by breaking of bread and by prayer, &c. There is not one instance in any church gathered together by the apostles, but what followed this order. It is therefore a delusion, for any one to imagine himself regenerated, while he is regardless of this primitive plan. The keeping of this order and plan, is called obedience to Jesus. "If ye love
 "me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the
 "Father, and he shall give you another comforter,
 "that

* Acts ii. 41.

"that he may abide with you for ever; *even the spirit of truth*." When therefore the saints of Jesus meet together, it is not for amusement, or by the ties of custom, nor for mere speculation but it is, that their souls may be enriched by the increase of the divine life and fulness of God himself, according as he hath manifested himself to be the God of *infinite unchanging love* in the person of his Son. They meet together, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of him: the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to themward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power. And that they may know and see, what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things in Jesus Christ†."

It may be objected, "What occasion is there for all this knowledge, and great attention to the word of God? Or what need is there for this heavenly and divine life which you so much talk of, and which you call the second blessing of regeneration? If a man be justified from all his sins through faith in Jesus; and if it be true, that he is our wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, are we not compleat in him without any thing more? and as fit for heaven the moment we believe as we can be?" answer: It is most certainly true, that the moment we believe, we stand compleat in Christ by imputation; but it is not true, that we are immediately

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* John xiv. 15, 16, 21, 23. † Eph. i. 17,—19, iii. 9.

immediately on that account, sanctified in body, soul, and spirit, or sufficiently prepared for heaven. We have indeed a right to it by promise; as it is written: *He that believeth shall not come into condemnation, but have everlasting life.* I do not mean to limit the divine being to some certain time in which he only performs this work, but shew the necessity of it, before it is possible that we can enjoy God. As all enjoyments consist in the suitability of objects, and as no object can be suited to us, without there be something in it which corresponds with our ideas, and agrees with our taste of things: so it is impossible that we should love God and enjoy him, without there be first a change in us, into his image. In natural generation, there is generally, if not always, a production of the same image in the children, as in the parents. The lineaments of the face, and temper of mind, presently shew what family they are of. And can we suppose, that God does not beget his children into his likeness also? and that they do not presently discover their heavenly birth, by all suitable conversation and disposition of mind? If it were not so, the natural and well-known symbol, which our Lord hath used, to represent this great work, would have been improper. If there were not oneness with the nature of God and his children, there would not be perfect harmony, and consequently, not perfect happiness. And therefore when the divine and heavenly life of Christ, is communicated to the children of God, it is to bring or beget their souls into a oneness with himself, by weaning them from a love of this earth and all its follies. The works of the flesh, in which they formerly delighted, become now a burden to their soul, and hateful in their sight; and they set their affections on things above, which are become most desirable to them. But as the life of Christ, is only conveyed to the soul, through the knowledge of scripture and maintained thereby, hence arise

the necessity of a close, diligent, and humble attention to the sacred volume of revelation. The spirit works by no other medium: so it is said, *When he the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all the truth.*

Nor does the necessity of this divine and heavenly life, and its gradual growth by a knowledge of the word, which is the seed of it, militate against a sinner's being saved at the last hour, nor of his being taken to glory on the same day in which he believes. The thief on the cross, is an instance of this. But I cannot believe, that he was made capable of containing so great a weight of glory, as the apostles; or as those christians who lived to have their minds enlarged into the gospel glories of the *eternal Three*, and their hearts expanded wide by the divine nature, through the knowledge of the scriptures. I apprehend, the more we know of God here, and the more we suffer affliction for the truth's sake, the more we shall enjoy hereafter. "For our light afflictions which is but for a moment, worketh for us a *far more exceeding* and eternal weight of glory*."

This doctrine of different degrees of glory, does not appear foreign to the New Testament, nor is it inconsistent with the grace of God. "There is one glory of the Sun; and another glory of the Moon; and another glory of the Stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. *So also is the resurrection of the dead*†." But this difference, does not arise from any degree of good works done by us, but solely from the divine good pleasure, in working in us, according to his mighty power, those different degrees of the knowledge of himself; in which knowledge and experience, heaven alone consists.

G 2

Upon

* ii. Cor. iv. 17. † i. Cor. xv. 41, 42.

Upon the whole then, it appears, that human nature considered as such, is not capable of enjoying God, without a total change being wrought in the soul: and not only this, but that it does appear most evidently also, that no one can escape eternal damnation, which is justly due to the sins of all men, without justification by faith in the redemption that is in Jesus, flowing from the merits of his life and death; and that this doctrine of *justification*, is a necessary part of *regeneration*, made so, on account of the entrance of sin.—That it does appear likewise, from a connected view of the scriptures, that if sin had not entered, regeneration under one view, would, notwithstanding, have been requisite, ere man could enjoy ultimate glory. “For that which is *born of the flesh, is flesh*; and “that which is *born of the spirit, is spirit*.”

CH A P. VI.

TO conclude: The necessary effects of this doctrine of regeneration, is a good life, or a real love to the moral law of God; and that, from the most noble and exalted motives, the love of God manifested to the soul, in sending his only begotten Son, to be a propitiation for his sins; by which, he can now draw nigh to his Father's throne of grace, to find acceptance and strength, to help in every time of need. He not only pays a special regard to the moral law, but also, to all the gospel ordinances and institutions of Jesus, which are the means of maintaining and carrying on the divine life. In whatever relation of life he may be placed in by providence, in that he desires to act with dignity and honour to Christ Jesus. And though he cannot but think it a faithful saying,

*That they who have believed in God, should be careful to maintain good works, being good and profitable unto men**; yet, whenever these would rise so amiable in his view, as to take the name of (even) *petit saviour*, or administrators of good hope; he then through grace, casts them beneath his feet, and counts them as *loss and dung*, for the excellency of the knowledge of *Christ Jesus his Lord*; for whom he suffers the loss of all things†. Neither does he think it possible for any one to be born of God, without delighting in the law of God in the inward man; although he most assuredly finds another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind; and if he is not upon his guard, it may bring him into captivity to the law of sin‡.

If he have been a covetous man, he now begins to view it in the light of scripture, and cannot but hate it as idolatry. His heart is also opened to the relief of the needy; but especially to his brethren of the household of faith.

If he have been proud and ambitious, and possessed with the riches of this world; he now finds it his duty, to stand upon an equal footing with the poorest saint, and to cast off all high looks, and rather rejoice that he is made low in *Christ Jesus*: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away||.

If he have been of a malignant and hateful spirit, he cannot but see these tempers of mind to be of the devil—the seeds of murder and many evil works; and therefore he is rather desirous to overcome evil with good, and not to let the sun go down upon his wrath, forgiving his most inveterate enemies: even as God for *Christ's sake* hath forgiven him.

In short: adultery, fornication, lewdness, wantonness, and drunkenness; all kinds of gambling,

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plays,

* Titus iii. 8. † Phil. iii. 8. ‡ Rom. vii. 22, 23. James i. 9, 10. § Eph. vi. 26, 32.

plays*, and sports; foolish jestings, and idle conversation, must be done away by all who are real believers. These things are so opposite in their nature to that which he delights in as being his very life, that they become hateful to him in thought, much more to live in them.

Lastly; that very capital and leading command of Jesus, love to the brethren, takes place and prevails in his soul: so that those who bear the image of God in truth and practice, become most dear to him, even as his ownself. Without this, all pretensions to regeneration will be found not to avail at last. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God, love his brother also†."

This

* Some professors have recommended plays as innocent amusements, and also useful in exciting moral virtue. But surely such people are ignorant of the nature of dramatic performances, both in their sentiments, and the manner in which they are exhibited on the stage; where there is nothing but what naturally swells the mind with vanity and licentiousness, or what excites the passions of sympathy, to be mere dupes to mimicry and hypocrisy. Surely it must be sufficient to excite the most exalted virtue in every believer, if he contemplate that ever memorable scene that was acted from the garden of Gethsemane, to the accursed tree; where his Saviour suffered in the most inexpressible manner for his sins, that he might be delivered from endless woe. Virtue that is exalted from this tragic scene, is virtue indeed! But that which comes through the sentiments of plays, and the emotions, looks, and gestures of the Comedian, is an abomination in the sight of God.

† i. John vi. 20, 21.

This love, which hath its rise from God, as it were, cements them together in worship; and when any are first brought to the knowledge of the truth, it makes them seek diligently for that worship which is according to the spirit and truth, described in the New Testament, which is not in the oldness of the latter. They are not like the deluded followers of *antichrist*; who if they can but persuade themselves that they have as much religion as will at last, just save them from hell, they think it a matter of no moment, or as they more commonly phrase it, not essential, what sort of worship they bid God-speed to: for they can easily calm their own consciences, and stop the mouths of gainsayers, by replying, *we take the good, and leave the bad*. These, in their worship, are united by three leading principles—The love of the world, tradition, and custom: but the saints are cemented together, by the love of God, the love of the truth, and the love of each other: for whom I earnestly pray, that the God of all consolation and good hope, may bless their souls with a more full enjoyment of the life of Jesus, and keep their hearts and minds in the knowledge of himself, possessing that peace which passeth all understanding.

As to these who are despising the truth of God, neglecting the opportunities which they have to read his word, and search the scriptures, filling up the time that they have to spare from their lawful callings, in idleness and folly; or perhaps, in the pursuit of false wisdom and religion;—to such I say, the most dreadful and alarming threatenings are hangings over their heads; and if they continue thus to set at nought the revelation of God, they will burst as a deluge upon their heads, and sink them for ever down to endless despair, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth for ever.

But

But on the other hand, those who love the testimony of Jesus, and receive with all their mental powers his truth, neglecting no proper opportunity to search the scriptures, and read his blessed word, devoting the time which they have to spare to his service, and the good of their fellow-men; practising the wisdom which is from above;—to such the scriptures promise the greatest blessings—blessings in their own minds in this world, through the fellowship of Father, Son, and Spirit, in the belief of their truth; and blessings of the most perfect and celestial nature in the world to come; far beyond their present conceptions. And though they be despised and flouted by the men of this world, and rejected as hereticks, by the Scribes and Pharisees, yet how different will their case be when the Judge shall appear to pass final and eternal sentence upon all. The latter will call on the rocks and mountains; with the whole universe itself, to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb, and shall wail because of his coming, being conscious of what is to follow, that is, depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels before the foundation of the world.—The former's sorrow shall be turned into joy, at the glorious and majestic advent of their King and Saviour; attended with an innumerable retinue of angels, waiting to receive them, and to hear the joyful sentence pronounced upon them—Come ye blessed of my Father, receive ye the kingdom of heaven, which was prepared for you from the foundation of the world. *Amen.*

A
LETTER
ON THE SUBJECT OF
BAPTISM:

WRITTEN AT THE REQUEST OF A
GENTLEWOMAN.

WITH SOME ADDITIONAL
NOTES,
AND SLIGHT
ALTERATIONS.

LETTER

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THE writing of the following letter, was occasioned by the desire of a Gentlewoman in Norwich, with whom the writer was connected in church fellowship for a short time. But it being a matter of doubt with him from his first entrance into the above society, whether their common and professed principles of baptizing infants were right, he was led to enquire at the mouth of the scriptures themselves, without laying the least stress upon human authority for either side of the question, that he might be brought to the full persuasion of what was right or wrong.

Having therefore attentively examined the scriptures respecting this ordinance, he was convinced that he had been mislead by tradition and the common rules laid down by men for finding out truth; which he owns are useful as far as reason is to be employed about matters of mere speculation, and when reason is kept under perfect subjection to the divine declarations. However, though the writer changed his views, and in consequence of which, thought it his duty to withdraw from the said connection, in obedience to the command of his heavenly Father, who says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you*;" yet, none of these his professed brethren, complied so far with their duty as christians, as even to require
a reason

* ii. Cor. vi. 17.

a reason for the separation, or whether the grounds of it were scriptural or unscriptural, except one sister, who requested a reason for leaving the church, which he gave in the following letter.

But he desires that it may not be understood as if *baptism* were the only reason of the separation, but that some *other things* were included in his mind also; which he mentioned in private conversation, as he had opportunity: but being sensible that he could not proceed according to the apostolick plan, without first considering the present subject, he confined himself to it, as being the principal reason of the separation.

A LETTER

A
L E T T E R

ON

B A P T I S M.

Madam,

A GREEABLE to your request, and in compliance to my duty, I take the opportunity of laying before you the scripture account of the ordinance of baptism, together with the subjects thereof, in as plain and short a manner as I am able. You will agree with me, that the commission of the apostles, was of the utmost importance; and that the subject matter of it, was a display of the grandest and greatest things, that ever were made known to man. It must therefore accordingly demand our most serious and diligent investigation, that we may be thoroughly acquainted with the truths therein contained, and have our minds duly impressed with the same. For if we neglect the means by which the Divine Being conveys his blessings to his children, then we must also be deprived of the blessings that are intended to be conveyed thereby, whatever they may be, or relate to. The same as we say, if a brother omit attending to read or hear the word, he cannot be edified; or if he should neglect the duty of prayer, he cannot be supported in the day of temptation: and also, if he should abstain from the Lord's supper, we should be ready to think he had forgotten the Lord's death and sufferings, and did not look out for his second appearance. May not something of this

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nature

nature be justly applied to you? Have you not been living in the neglect of an ordinance of Christ, ever since you made a profession of his name? However, I shall leave you (my dear sister) to make your answer to the question, after you have read the following lines.

Let us now attend to the command of Jesus to his apostles, and what it was they were commissioned to do: and as it must be granted, that they acted according to the directions of their Master; let us see how they acted, and in what manner they fulfilled their commission; for surely it must be the safest way of understanding the meaning of a command in scripture, to see in what manner it was obeyed and performed by those that could not err. This will prevent us from being misguided by the traditions of the *elders*. Nor let us suspect any deficiency in the clear word of revelation, relative to our privileges and duty as the meanest and weakest christians. For if once we suppose, that Jesus and his apostles, have left something in their commands, uncertain and abstruse, to employ the *reverend and learned**, before the rude and unlearned

* Accordingly we have found the learned pedobaptists writing large volumes, to prove infant sprinkling to be the practice of the ancient christians; and when they suppose they have done it, they think it sufficient, if the unlearned take their word for it. But what must those do, who can scarcely read any other book but their plain English Bible, when they are told by equally as learned hands, that there is no account of infant baptism or sprinkling, till after Tertullians time? which according to the learned Gale's account, was 220 years after the birth of Christ, or about 160 after the death of the oldest apostle. But the above gentlemen have employed their learning in the New Testament also; and have informed the vulgar, that the word *baptize*, means, in greek, pouring or sprinkling, as well as dipping. What are they to do in this case also? to be sure! believe them

learned can understand them, I do not see how we can believe or receive them as the certain truths of God, without believing them in some measure upon the authority of men: or how, if this were the case, Jesus should have one fold, and be the *alone shepherd*; for the reverend and learned, are most miserably divided, even about the plainest things in the New Testament.

But to proceed with the commission, as recorded by Matthew, in chap. xxvii, ver. 19, 20. "Goye therefore and TEACH all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; TEACHING THEM to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

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them ! It may perhaps be asked on the other hand, How the unlearned antibedobaptists come to know that the word baptize, means to dip, rather than sprinkle or pour, if they are not to credit their learned friends ? I answer, there are three ways of knowing, by which the plainest man may be persuaded of the truth of it. First ; they know from the manner of performing baptism ; which was thus : The persons went down INTO, and came OUT, of the water. Now the most illiterate knows, that there is no need to go into the water to be sprinkled or have water poured upon him. Secondly ; they know by baptism's being called in scripture, a burial ; but to sprinkle or pour a little dry mould upon a corpse, is not to bury him, but to put him below the surface is : therefore sprinkling or pouring, is not to baptize, but dipping is. Thirdly ; they know from what the enemies of their cause grant, at least, some of the candid of them ; namely, that the word baptize, may mean to dip, and that the apostles practised it in this way, in general ; but that sprinkling or pouring may do as well in these days, as the manner of applying water is not essential to the ordinance. Thus they see the truth breaking through men's prejudices, and causing them to confess it as it were, against their minds.

It is astonishing to me, that some professors should overlook a grand part of this commission, who otherwise may be looked upon in a very respectable light. But being blinded by the inventions of men, they have seldom or never read this plain command, and some others in scripture, without carrying with them the ideas which they have been impressed with from their youth, and by their teachers; so concluding that this command either includes infant baptism, or at least, does not exclude them from it. Others of them think, that it hath nothing to do with infants, relating only to believers. Thus are they divided among themselves: and hence it comes to pass, from one or other of these quarters, that the right use of baptism is entirely laid aside, and the command of Jesus rarely put in practice: for they leave no opportunity for believers to be baptized, always taking care to *asperse or perfuse* them beforehand. And when an extraordinary case happens, that an adult person makes a confession, who has not been thus aspersed or perfused, they impute it to the infidelity of his parents, and at last leave him as much without baptism as ever. But worst for themselves, they enhance their own crime, by substituting a childish ceremony in the place of the command of Jesus, and then consummating the whole, by a profanation of the sacred name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They do not indeed, view it in this light, or else they must, and would, be shocked at the thoughts of it.

But now I trust, as weak an abettor of this cause as I am in my own view, and may be in your esteem, yet I am able to prove the falsehood of the above three different opinions. First; that this command does not include infants in baptism. Second; that it excludes them from it. Third; that it hath somewhat to do with infants, so far as to exclude them.—But the third particular, is included in the proof of the second. Permit me

just to say to you by the bye, that I think, there is no need for this task which I have set myself, provided that the mind were not corrupted by vain words on this subject, as it was not in the apostolic age, when the christians received the declaration, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved;" and when they saw the apostles going about to teach the doctrines of Jesus, and then baptize those whom they taught; thus discipling them.

To proceed with the first proof, that the commission doth not include infants. My reason is, because it strictly *enjoins teaching* before baptism. "Go TEACH all nations, baptizing them, &c." Note, the relative term, (*them*) and if you ask the question, "Who are to be baptized?" the scripture answers, "Those who are taught." But infants cannot be taught by any rule of revelation or reason whatever, and therefore it follows that the commission can by no means include them.

Certainly, the command of Jesus, cannot be so ambiguous in its nature, as to direct, or rather include in the direction, subjects quite different from each other, the taught and untaught*, and what is more, the impossibility of being taught, while they are infants. If this were admitted, we

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might

* I have met with a person, since this epistle was first wrote, who would persuade me that the greek verb, *matheteuo*, means, to make disciples, either by teaching or without teaching, which is just as much as saying, that the word literally means, either to teach or not teach. This is a droll kind of a word indeed! How confounding then must this be to the apostles, to find such a word in the commission! Surely they must be at a stand, to know whether they were to teach at all, or whether they might not baptize all they met with, without asking them any questions, and then teach them afterwards. But Mr Gale and others, have proved that this word means teaching only; both from its derivations,

might suppose this command to include three different subjects as well as two; believers, and persons who never heard the gospel that they might reject it, and consequently cannot be called unbelievers of it; (for an unbeliever implies, that a person hath had the opportunity of reading the Bible, but yet he disregards it in the doctrines, either in the whole or in part of them.) And then the third sort of subjects, might be infants, who can neither believe, reject, nor be taught.

You will say perhaps, that infants make up a part of the nations to whom the apostles were sent to teach, and therefore ought to be baptized. I grant they do make up a part of the nations as a body of the human species, but not a part of those who can be taught; for though the words of the commission are, *Teach all nations*, yet, they do not signify *all*, of all nations, but a part of all nations. *All Judea* are said to come to John's baptism, and were baptized of him: but then, the *all*, were such as confessed their sins. But if you should still insist that the words are unlimited, they would prove too much, and more than you will grant; for then, they would include other characters besides infants who are not capable of being taught; such

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tions, and the constant and invariable use of it in the greek writers.—See his reflections on Mr Wall's history of infant baptism. Such instances shew, to what wretched shifts these men are put to, in supporting a doctrine invented by men, to suit their own worldly ends; and which doctrine, has no other tendency but to deceive, and give a wrong view to the most important doctrines of Christ. Their worldly passions and superstitious hearts work so powerfully, that they lead them to support plain contradictions, and make words speak, and be expressive of actions quite opposite to each other. To support such a cause, a man must either be a knave, idiot, unbeliever, or most dangerously blinded by tradition and his own vain reasoning.

as are in a state of *insanity*, and *idiots*. And moreover, if baptism is not to be precisely regulated by teaching, infidels themselves and their children, or any other abominable person might be included by the same rule. Thus I am persuaded that infants are not included in the commission; and a sentence or two more, will prove the second particular, namely, that they are designedly excluded: for we cannot well suppose, that Jesus was so incapable (if we may be allowed the expression) in directing his apostles whom they were to baptize, as literally to exclude those whom he did not design to be excluded. If therefore he had not designed to exclude infants from baptism, he would have made a plain exception in their favour, in this, or some other passage in the New Testament. Nor would this commission have been worded as it is, because it cannot admit of any exception as it now stands, without a plain contradiction in terms and common language. And it is also most reasonable to suppose, that if Jesus had intended infants to be baptized, he would have given as plain a command for them, as for adults, why not? and if this had been the case, we should have had some instance of it in the New Testament. But if we attend to the conduct of the apostles, who must be supposed to act under the influence of their commission, and in all things up to it, we shall find not the least hint in their records, of any infants being baptized. We do indeed, as was observed before, hear of Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, coming to John's baptism, but we find what *all* they were; even such as *confessed their sins*, being baptized of him in Jordan. But it seems according to Matthew iii. 9. that there were some who wanted baptism in another way, and not by confessing their sins, but rather by pleading their fleshly relation to Abraham, which if this would have done, they might have

have brought their infants also, who stood in the same relation to Abraham as themselves; and so both might have been baptized together. But the holy men of God, put a negative upon their vain and fleshly pretences, by giving them to understand that God was not confined to them, nor esteemed them as his children on that account, and that he never baptized on any such considerations. "Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

The practice of the moderns* will admit of the same censure; who bring their children to baptism on

* This is spoken of the independents: but how contrary to scripture is the practice of the church of England-men! They, sprinkle their infants by promise of its sponsors, or which they profanely call, Godfathers, and that, without the least examination of their characters. Open drunkards and swearers, and men without conscience, may stand up as *sureties*, and declare or promise instead of the infant, "That he will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his commandments;" while it is well known, they neither believe God's word, nor keep his commandments, but rather break them as fast as they can. And so far from these Godfathers teaching their Godsons to read the word of God, they will sooner teach them to swear and lie, and read fables. After the priest has gone as contrary to the word of God as he well can do, in sprinkling and crossing the child with water, which he calls baptism, then the child is said to be "REGENERATED, and grafted into the body of Christ's church." This cannot well be called a secret way to hell, but rather the broad way to it. And I must honestly declare, that I firmly believe, both priests and people, if they continue in such abominable customs and wickedness, must forever perish.

on account of the faith of their parents. Abraham had faith too, as well as they, but it seems his faith would not do for his children.

Again; we find Philip fulfilling the commission in the city of Samaria, in preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and in the name of Christ, and when they *believed* Philip, they were baptized *both men and women*. Here is nothing said about infants. It is true, we are not certain whether these men and women had any to be baptized, no more than you are of there being infants in the Jailor's household: but this we may be sure of, that if there had been any infants baptized, they would have been mentioned with their parents; for can we imagine, that if infants were disciples in the apostles' views, that they would not mention them in their baptism as well as adults! As to the Jailor's household, we are assured from the sacred history itself, that *all* that were baptized, were such as *repented in God*; this, infants cannot do. But I would hope, there is no occasion to talk about such trifling matters to you on this subject; for any one may know, if they chuse to look into scripture, that there are several *households* made up of adults only. I shall cite but two places, which may suffice. "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household*." This is spoken of the apostles and believers, but not of infants. "And a man's foes shall be they of his household: which cannot be thought of infants." We shall now attend to the other particular contained in the commission, which is the action of baptism, I mean the mode of it, to speak in your style; otherwise, I think it as absurd to enquire into what the mode of baptism is, as to ask what dipping is. But to tell you the truth, the word

* Matth. x. 25, 26.

word *baptize**, is no English term; nor derived from any, as far as I know of the matter; and therefore conveys no precise idea to the merely English reader of the New Testament. However, people who are fond of the sound through custom, must have some notion affixed to it; and in general, they are almost born with one, and brought up with it from their infancy, though it be quite opposite to the apostolic sense and practice of it. Some have it to sprinkle, others, to pour and to wash; and it may be to circumcise, for any thing they seem to know from the apostles manner of enforcing and practising this solemn ordinance. And in this ignorance are infants nursed up, under the persuasion that they are made members of Christ, by what is in truth, no more than a mock baptism: and therefore the truth is, they never were baptized at all, much less made christians or initiated into a church of Christ. If baptism be

not

* It is a greek word turned into English characters; or thus: baptize, for the greek *baptizo*. "It means "to dip, immerse, or plunge into water."—See Parkhurst's Greek and English Lexicon, page 90. "The native and proper signification of it (says Leigh) is to dip into water, or plunge under water. It is taken from the dyer's vat, and is a dying, or giving a fresh colour, and not a bare washing only: whence cometh baptism." *Critica sacra*, under *baptizo*, and *baptoma*. We know, that both these Criticks were of a different opinion in their own views of baptism: which shews how far prejudice against the truth, will operate, even to lead them to contradict, the plain and native sense of words, contrary to their own knowledge of them. The lexicographers, and interpreters of words. The former of these, under *Baptizo*, gives this derivation: that is, from *bapto* to dip. But he says, immediately after, that it "occurs not strictly in this sense in the "New Testament, unless so far as this is included "sense iii. that is, (says he) to baptize, to immerse

not administered in the very same way which Jesus commanded that it should be, it must be some other ceremony of man, and not the thing commanded, and therefore cannot be baptism, in the sight of the first institutor of it.

The sacred writer of the acts of the apostles, informs us, that "Philip and the eunuch, went on their way, till they came to a *certain water* : "and the eunuch said, see, here is water ; what doth hinder me to be baptized ? and Philip said, *if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest*. "And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still : and *they went down into the water*, both Philip and the eunuch, and *he baptized him*. And when they were *come up out of the water*, the spirit of the Lord caught away

"or wash with water in token of purification from sin, "and from spiritual pollution." And then he adds, for a fourth sense, "To baptize by sprinkling." But that it does occur in the New Testament, strictly and only in the sense of dipping, even when the ordinance of baptism is not intended, will appear from a certain passage, where Dives desires Abraham to send Lazarus, (*hina bapfe*) that he may dip the tip of his finger in water — Luke xvi. 24. Now how would it appear, suppose we should say, send Lazarus to sprinkle or pour his finger into water, &c. this appears to any one, entirely foolish. The latter, after having told us, that the native and proper signification of the word is, to DIP or to PLUNGE under water, says again, "Christ no where requireth dipping, but only baptizing." What is to be made of such villainous contradictions ? However, it may be justly observed here, that if the word baptizo had been suffered to be rightly translated, we, in our English New Testament, would have found Christ *no where requiring baptizing*, but always DIP-PING.

• Acts viii. 36, 37.

"away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more." We have another notable account of the apostolic manner of baptizing. "John baptized in Enon, near to Salem, (the reason is given) because there *"was much water there*."* He baptized in Jordan also, and we know it was for the same reason.

There are two things to be noted in these passages, which prove the form of baptism. The first is, the places chosen for that purpose,—abounding with *much water*. The second is, the action of going down *into* the water, and coming up *out* of it. Now if it had been by aspersion or perfusion, they had no occasion to go to Enon and Jordan, for water; there being a sufficient quantity in any common house for that purpose. Nor would it have been a just reason in the evangelist, for telling us, that these places were chosen for the purpose of baptizing. But some, in order to avoid the force of these reason and plain facts, tell us they went up to the mid-leg in those hot countries, and water was poured upon them; although they themselves do not follow the example, but in these cold climates, think it sufficient to sprinkle in the house. So they trifle with the word of God, supposing that the Holy Ghost accommodated his divine appointment, partly for the cooling of their legs, and regaling themselves in a hot day, and partly to shew their obedience, &c. What other reason have they for saying they went up to the mid-leg, rather than stand at the shore side to have water sprinkled or poured upon them? Do they say standing up to the mid leg, was emblematical of something spiritual? let them shew us what? They cannot well deny the whole fact; that John, when he baptized our Lord, and Philip, when he baptized the eunuch, *both went down into the water*.

* John iii. 23.

water, and came up out of the water*; but rather than grant that they were dipped or immersed, they would amuse the ignorant and unwary, with the above human invention.

There is another irrefragable argument besides the two former, which proves the mode of baptism; and that is, when Paul is writing to the church at Rome, taking a spiritual view of baptism, he compares it to a burial, "Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are BURIED with him by baptism into death†" The same apostle to the church at Colosse, says, they were "BURIED with him (Christ) in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead‡."

I

You

* We do not pretend to prove the mode of baptism, from the circumstance of Philip and the eunuch going down into the water; although it amounts to a presumptive proof of it: for, as we have said before, they had no occasion to go INTO the water, to have water poured or sprinkled upon them. But the ground of our argument, is taken from the express words of scripture, which are, "And they went both down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; (*kai ebaptisen auton*) that is, and he dipped him" The other two particulars agree with this translation, namely, *they went on their way till they came to a CERTAIN water.*—And they went down both (*EIS to hudor, i. e.*) INTO the water. But in case, sprinkling or pouring, were the modes of baptism, their riding on till they came to a CERTAIN water, would be rendered quite useless; for the quantity that is required to asperse or perfuse a person, cannot be properly termed, a CERTAIN water; nor, the circumstance of their going down INTO the water, at all necessary, for these actions.

† Rom. vi. iii. ‡ Col. ii. 12.

You see then, how all the ancient christians were baptized, and what their baptism pointed out; namely, The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and their death, burial, and resurrection virtually through union to him their head: that as he was raised up by the power, and in the glory of the Father; even they also, who are his body, should be raised in due time, being made perfect in soul and body, and prepared for the enjoyment of the presence of the Lamb, and the seven spirits which are before the throne of God.

Lastly; you see also, that the word baptize, contained in the commission, is to *dip or immerse**, to put overhead in water, or as it were, to bury the person in it: so that they were as truly dipped all over in water, as they were buried into the death of Christ in a justified way and spiritual sense. And the preposition *into*, which is used in these passages, is to shew the relation between the verb *baptize*, and the nouns *Christ* and *death*, &c. defining precisely the nature of the action, connected with its subject and object (i. e.) man, baptized or dipped into water; for we cannot say, sprinkle or pour a man into the water, because, the subject of this action, cannot bear such a division of parts, as to be poured forth or sprinkled.

Consider

* This is granted by one of the greatest writers of the pedobaptists. He says, "Their general and ordinary way was to baptize by IMMERSION or DIPPING the person, whether it were an infant or grown man or woman, into the water. This is so plain and clear by an infinite number of passages, that as one cannot but pity the weak endeavours of such pedobaptists as would maintain the negative of it; so also we ought to disown and shew a dislike of the prophane scoffs which some people give to the English antipedobaptists, merely for their use of dipping." See Mr. Wall's history of infant baptism, lib. ii. p. 351.

Consider these things, and may the Lord give you an understanding in all things necessary for your comfort and edification.

*From your sincere friend, and
humble servant in Christ, &c.*

P. S. If it be in my power to give you any further satisfaction on this subject, I am ready to do it at all times, and in the best way I can: but I would have you to understand, that I cannot look upon those as believers, who are scoffing at this ordinance, under the notion of its being a matter of no consequence. The apostles never received any into church fellowship, but such as believed the report of the gospel, and were baptized: and who are we, to withstand God? "The Pharisees" and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against "themselves, being not baptized of John."—See Luke vii. 30.

THE END.

ERRATA.

In the Address, p. v. l. 1, 6, 23, for lose, read loss. p. x, l. 9, for ocult, read occult. In the Book, p. 10, l. 9, for Cain's, read Cain. p. 11, l. 1, for know, read known. p. 15, l. 26, for an, read and. p. 44, l. 7, comma after obvious. p. 48 l. 4, for Ipeak's, read speaks. p. 57, l. 9, after be, read judged. p. 65, l. 7, for lose, read loss. p. 67, l. 34, dele the s in hangings. p. 75, l. 19, for antibedobaptists, read antipedobaptists.



